Doctrinal Standards of Methodism

By
Thomas B. Neely, D.D., LL.D.

Doctrinal Standards of Methodism
8vo, cloth . net $2.00

Bishop Neely's great book on Methodism will be found an addition to Church History well worth having. Clear and lucid, it cannot fail to be appreciated by not only Methodists, but by other denominations as well. It will take its place at once as an authoritative work of reference on the great subject about which it treats.

American Methodism. Its Division and Unification. 12mo, cloth net $1.50

"Dr. Neely knows the history of his Church as few men know it, and the fruit of this knowledge is here presented. He has ransacked the annals of Methodism and brought together many historical facts never before issued in book form."
—*Evangelical.*

The Minister in the Itinerant System. Cloth net $1.00

"Bishop Neely discusses frankly the fact that large numbers of strong men eagerly accept official service, leaving the itinerant pastorate. He states the system itself briefly, but the burden of the book is a full discussion of the bearing of it all on the minister himself. We do not know any other book which states the whole case with such eminent fairness."—*The Continent.*

Doctrinal Standards of Methodism

Including the Methodist Episcopal Churches

By

THOMAS BENJAMIN NEELY, D. D., LL.D.

Bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church

Author of "American Methodism—Its Divisions and Unification," "The Minister in the Itinerant System," "The Evolution of Episcopacy and Organic Methodism," "The Governing Conference in Methodism," "The Bishops and the Supervisional System in the Methodist Episcopal Church," "Journal of 1792 General Conference," "Young Workers in the Church," "The Church Lyceum," "Parliamentary Practice," "The Parliamentarian," "Juan Wesley," "La Predicación," "South America a Mission Field," "South America a Missionary Problem," etc. :: :: :: ::

NEW YORK CHICAGO

Fleming H. Revell Company

LONDON AND EDINBURGH

Copyright, 1918, by
FLEMING H. REVELL COMPANY

New York: 158 Fifth Avenue
Chicago: 17 North Wabash Ave.
London: 21 Paternoster Square
Edinburgh: 75 Princes Street

Preface

THIS is an age of extremes in religious thought and of restless fluctuations in opinion. On the one hand some decry dogma and denounce creeds, while on the other extreme many are in full cry after what they suppose are new issues, some for one professedly new theory, and others for a host of conflicting notions, the important thing seeming to be not what is true but what is new. For many, indeed, it is sufficient and most attractive, if the notion has only the word "new" prefixed, though the thing may be as old as error itself.

Some of these "new" things, which really may be very old, grow out of legitimate, but misdirected, longings of the soul; some out of ignorance; and some out of a morbid susceptibility; while some of the most popular of the "new religions," or new teachings, have demonstrated that they were, and are, unmitigated frauds by which the designing few have deluded many sincere souls.

Nevertheless, and notwithstanding these misleading novelties, the great mass of the people clings to the old Biblical teachings and leaves these restless extremists in the minority and with diminishing influence, though still doing much harm.

Another condition to be deplored is that, within the Churches, there is a lack of clear, precise, and positive

knowledge of, and about, the religious views the persons in church membership are presumed to accept in their own denomination.

Rigid catechetical instruction in the home, and even in the school is not to-day as general as it was a generation or two ago, and denominational information is not imparted as thoroughly as in former times, so that, as a result, church people generally do not have comprehensive and accurate knowledge as to the essentials of their own denomination, and this makes for misty thinking as to religious truth and to instability in churchly adherence.

It is very important for those connected with any Church to be familiar with its history and nature, and especially to know its doctrines and to know where they can be found in an authoritative form.

Sometimes writers and speakers in the same denomination contradict each other, or say contradictory things when making statements as to religious doctrine. This is confusing, and the perplexed reader or hearer wonders which one is right. In such cases the question must be: Where shall we find the authority that will determine which is correct and which is incorrect, and what is the truth?

If the denomination has its doctrines formulated, and the inquirer knows where to find the formulation, he can turn to the formulation and learn for himself, just as one may turn to a constitution or the statutes of a legislative body and learn the law.

Methodism, with its growing millions and its almost world-wide sweep, has been one of the saving influences, among the Protestant denominations and beyond, in the matter of Scriptural teaching, and it has been

one of the great balance wheels in the world's swirl of religious thought and inquiry, helping to hold the masses steadily to the truth, and a great magnet to draw back those who have been caught by centrifugal thought forces, and yet it is to be feared that some of its members have been influenced more or less by the passing currents, and, to some extent, by the mental commotion, as well as by the doctrinal indifference round about them.

True as it has been to its old convictions, yet a time has come when the older generations who lived nearer the beginnings have passed away and a new generation, not so exactly informed as to the facts in the history of the Church and as to its doctrines, has taken their place.

This later generation, lacking the closer touch and the special knowledge of their forefathers, will be at a disadvantage in the doctrinal struggles now on, unless they can be furnished with a somewhat equivalent store of information on these particular points.

Many of the present generation not only are without the knowledge of the fathers, but they do not know where to go to find authoritative answers to the questions which arise in their own minds or which are propounded to them by others, while some who have not been rooted and grounded in the old doctrines are in danger of being swept away by the rising floods of destructive interrogation.

In view of such facts, well-informed lovers of Methodism, including those of the Methodist Episcopal Church, have thought this the proper time for a book that on the matter of doctrines may guide in the right direction, and that it is imperatively demanded to meet

most perilous present conditions, as well as to meet an ever present need.

With this urgent feeling individuals and ministerial bodies have requested the publication of this volume on "The Doctrinal Standards of Methodism, Including the Methodist Episcopal Churches," a work intended primarily for all branches of Wesleyan Methodism.

The book is a history of the denominational doctrines, a presentation of the doctrinal standards, and a statement of their practical and legal bearings, particularly in their relation to the ministry and membership of the Methodistic Churches, yet having an interest and value to those not connected with Methodism.

THOMAS B. NEELY.

Philadelphia, Pa.

Contents

PREFATORY 5

An age of extremes in religious thinking and of rapid fluctuations in opinion—Some deride dogma while others insist on positive declarations—Seekers of new issues more anxious perhaps for the new than the true—Much called new is antique error—Some honest seekers are deceived by brazen fraud—The solid majority clings to the old truth but false teaching works injury—Many in the churches lack accurate knowledge as to the doctrinal teachings even of their own denomination—For which there are various causes—Members should know the doctrines of their own denomination and where they may be found—Methodism has been a saving influence amid doctrinal disturbance—Yet the older generations have passed and a new generation is at a disadvantage in not having the close historic touch of the fathers.

Because of ever present needs and of the peculiar present needs the publication of this book has been requested—It gives a history of Methodistic doctrine, presents the doctrinal standards, and points out their legal and practical bearings—Should have value to those outside as well as inside Methodistic bodies.

I. RELIGIOUS BELIEFS 21

Belief common to humanity—All men believe—Man believes in different lines—All peoples have some degree of religious belief—Religious beliefs are necessary—Every Church must have some religious faith—Every denomination has to it common beliefs—There must be standards of faith or doctrine—As necessary as a constitution for a state—Dr. Schaff's definition of a creed—Principal Shaw's statement as to the necessity of a creed—Paul on sound doctrine—Dogma—Matthew Arnold and Dr. Shedd on dogma—No valid objection to dogma or creed—Advantages of—Nature of, and obligation to, standards of doctrine—Creeds should contain essentials but be concise—Christian doctrine based on the New Testament and the Old Testament—Bennetts on doctrine as the central thing in church life and the maintenance of a connectional system—Doctrinal standards are needed by all.

II. HISTORIC STANDARDS IN CHRISTIAN CHURCHES 36

Doctrinal formulations not modern—Creedal forms developed early—Creeds and Articles of Religion—The Apostles' Creed—Dr. Philip Schaff's comment—The Nicene Creed—The Athanasian Creed—The Chalcedon—Doctrinal formulations of the Greek Church—Of the Roman Church—Of the Lutheran Church—Of the Reformed Churches—Of the Presbyterian Church—Of the Church of England—Principal Shaw on Anglican and Calvinist Reformers—Articles of the Protestant Episcopal Church—Dr. Shaw on Protestant Creeds—Forms of standards—Standards to be respected.

III. THE METHODIST MOVEMENT 52

The Protestant Reformation—The appeal to the Bible—The spread of Protestantism—In England—Henry VIII—In Scotland—Patrick Hamilton—The break with the papacy —"The Protestant Reformed Religion"—Ecclesiastical and political fluctuations—Edward VI—Queen Mary—Queen Elizabeth—Puritanism—Cromwell—Charles I—Reaction and Restoration—Charles II—Uniformity—Another and Spiritual Reformation—The moral and religious condition of Britain—Early part of the eighteenth century—Comments of Isaac Taylor, Green, Bishop Butler, Bishop Burnet, Voltaire, Carlyle, Doctor Gregory—John Wesley—Samuel and Susannah Wesley—Charles Wesley—The Holy Club—The title "Methodist"—George Whitefield—Closed pulpits but open fields—John Wesley's first society—"The United Society"—Estimates of John Wesley by Macauley, Arnold, Southey—Effects of the Methodist Movement—Green's observation thereon.

IV METHODISM AND DOCTRINE 62

Methodism a marvel—What made it such—Its educational beginning, organization, methods—Wesleys, Whitefield, Coke —Fletcher, Clarke, Benson, Walsh, Watson — Watson's Theological Institutes—Opinions of John Brown, of Edinburgh, and J. W. Alexander—Methodism always had great scholars and orators—Organization, preaching, methods—Methodist preaching and doctrine—Biblical, Christian, and Protestant basis—Had a doctrinal foundation—Must have had standards of doctrine.

V. JOHN WESLEY AND DOCTRINE . . 72

John Wesley the key to Methodism—Changes in his early doctrinal views—A doctrinal preacher—Professor Faulkner's observation—Wesley as a writer and publisher of doctrine—Statement of Doctor Anson West—Did Wesley make little or no moment of doctrinal matters?—He taught doctrines and demanded beliefs—He maintained fundamental Chris-

tian doctrines—What Wesley himself said—Misinterpreted citations—The true import—Wesley not a latitudinarian—An Arminian—Broke with Whitefield—Fletcher's checks—Against Antinomianism—Letter to Archbishop Secker concerning the doctrines of the Friends—Socinianism—Original Sin—Dr. John Taylor—"Short History of Methodism"—Hate some doctrines but love the people—Wesley against Romanism—Wesley favored the expulsion of those who proclaimed wrong beliefs as to essentials—Liberal as to non-essentials but exacting as to essentials—Against Arians—Believed in the Scriptures as divinely inspired, and in Christ as "the eternal supreme God," and insisted on correct beliefs.

VI. "ONLY ONE CONDITION" 95

The condition for admission into Wesley's first societies—The General Rule—The nature of Wesley's earliest societies—Conditions in that early day explain the "one condition"—Received all practically on probation—Conditions for remaining in the society were many—The "only one condition" implied many doctrinal beliefs—In that one composite condition Wesley required many fundamental faiths—It was not merely one thing but many doctrines.

VII. DOCTRINAL STANDARDS AMONG WESLEY'S FOLLOWERS 101

They had doctrines and doctrines in common—How they may be ascertained—What is a standard?—For a time Wesley was the standard—The General Rules—Doctrinal declarations in the Conference Minutes—John Wesley's first fifty-two sermons—Titles and texts—Professor Loofs' judgment—John Wesley's "Notes on the New Testament"—Principal Shaw and Bishop Matthew Simpson's comments on the standards—The Methodist Church of Canada—Some British views—Questions in British Wesleyan Methodist Conference—Titles of Wesley's sermons—Not every sermon Wesley wrote is an obligatory standard—Wesley would not tolerate latitudinarian preaching by his ministers—All Wesley's sermons have value—Altogether a great body of divinity—Strict requirements by the British Conference—Dr. Benjamin Gregory's "Side Lights"—British strictness in examinations—Rev. William Myles testifies to unchanged doctrines—Wesley's followers always had doctrinal standards.

VIII. CHARACTERISTICS OF METHODIST DOCTRINE 121

The doctrinal system is simple, practical, and spiritual—The outstanding characteristic is Arminianism—John Calvin—Dr. Philip Schaff on extreme Calvinism—James Arminius—

Richard Watson's views on the system of Arminius—The Arminians or Remonstrants—Simon Episcopius—Wesley against Calvinism—The Arminianism of Wesley varied from the Arminianism of Holland—Dean Tillett's comments —Wesley's Arminianism—Wesley's stamp on Methodist doctrine—Dr. Anson West on Wesley and his doctrines—The peculiar newness of Methodistic doctrine—Wesley's statement—Professor Tillett—Bishop Holland N. McTyeire—Dean Tillett's estimate of Methodist doctrine.

IX. EARLY AMERICAN METHODISM AND ITS DOCTRINES 136

Early Methodism in America was an offshoot from British Wesleyanism in the early part of the second half of the eighteenth century—Beginning in British colonial times, it was itself British—It was under the same government as British Methodism and had the same local organization—Being under the same government, it recognized the same theology and had the same standards of doctrine—These standards were specified in the early deeds to Methodist property, as in Philadelphia and New York—The early American Conferences recognized the same doctrines and standards, as in the Conferences of 1773, 1781, and 1784—The doctrines of Wesleyan Methodism were everywhere the same.

X. AMERICAN METHODISM REORGANIZED—THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH . 142

Methodism took root in America and rapidly spread, but needed an ordained ministry—There was a demand by the people for the sacraments from their own preachers—Appeals were made to the Reverend John Wesley to bring this about—The independence of the United States of America enabled Wesley to plan the reorganization of American Methodism into a complete and independent Church—He arranged for this reorganization in 1784—It was not a withdrawal from the Church of England—The Established Church of England never controlled Wesley's Societies—American Methodism had a right to reorganize itself—The Protestant Episcopal Prayer Book of 1789—Wesley's letter to his American followers, September 10, 1784—Wesley "a Scriptural episcopus," or bishop—Ordains Richard Whatcoat and Thomas Vasey for America—Set apart Thomas Coke, D. C. L., to oversee the work in America—Francis Asbury to have joint authority with Doctor Coke—Meeting of Coke and Asbury at Barratt's Chapel in the State of Delaware—The Methodist Episcopal Church in America organized in December, 1784, at the "Christmas Conference" in Baltimore.

XI. HAD THE NEW CHURCH STANDARDS OF DOCTRINE? 151

To be a complete Church it must have had doctrines and a common agreement as to some doctrines—That it had standards of doctrine is a necessary presumption—If it had such standards what are they, and where can they be found?—Its preachers and people had doctrines and doctrinal standards before and just before they were reorganized into a Church—They had Wesley's Fifty-two Sermons, Wesley's Notes on the New Testament and the Minutes, and also the General Rules—In the reorganization they continued and carried over into the new Church the same standards they had the moment before the church organization was formed—They did not need to formally readopt the doctrinal standards they had any more than they needed to readopt the General Rules—No change was made in their doctrines but there was an added formulary—"The Sunday Service"—Wesley's Twenty-four Articles of Religion—Wesley's right to prepare these Articles—The old standards with these Articles of Religion were the new Church's standards of doctrine, and the church law continues to speak of "our standards of doctrine."

XII. THE ARTICLES OF RELIGION 159

Importance of Wesley's new Articles of Religion—Gave completeness to Church—Linked with general Protestantism and historic Christianity—Based on the Anglican Articles but with variations—Made them say less and more—Professor Shaw's observation—Calvinism, Antinomianism, and Sacramentarianism eliminated—Wesley did not change the Articles of the State Church, but constructed Articles of Religion for a new Church—These were comprehensive of fundamental doctrines—Wesley had a right to make them—The reorganized body on a new basis had its rights which it exercised in adopting the new Articles—They then existed by double authority, and were binding upon the Church and those therein—These Articles were printed in "The Sunday Service" of 1784—Calvinistic influence in the XXXIX Articles of the Church of England—The ancient may be true—Fundamental doctrines must have the element of permanence—The authors of the XXXIX did not make Wesley's Articles of Religion—Wesley made the XXIV—An illustration of the changes Wesley made—"Original or Birth Sin"—The adequacy of the new Articles—Doctor Tillett's remark—Not necessary to put everything in the Articles—Certain doctrines in the other standards—The Anti-Romish attitude—Methodism always had the substance of the XXIV Articles—Principal Shaw's remark upon the linking of these Articles with the "Catholic faith" of the general Christian Church.

XIII. THE ADDED ARTICLE 173

An additional article in the Service Book of 1786, but adopted by the organizing Conference of 1784—Made the Twenty-third Article and made twenty-five articles instead of twenty-four—So the Church really started out with Twenty-five Articles—The new article related to the recognition of the national government of "The United States of America" —Observations by Doctor John Emory and Doctor David Sherman—Wesley in his Service Book had prayers for "the Supreme Rulers" of the new Republic—Another prayer in Sunday Service in 1786—Doctor Robert Emory's note—The Anglican Article "Of the Civil Magistrates"—The added article "Of the Rulers of the United States of America"—The Articles taken over by the "Wesleyan Methodist Church" in Great Britain—Its modification of Article XXIII—The Methodist Church of Canada adopted the Twenty-five Articles but modified the Twenty-third Article—The Thirty-seventh Article of the Protestant Episcopal Church—The title of the nation not the United States but "The United States of America"—The country is America and the people Americans—The new Church recognized "The United States of America" and the Church itself was "The Methodist Episcopal Church in America," or, as later, "The Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States of America," for they were equivalent titles in their minds but the latter was more accurate—Asbury's certificate of consecration had "The Methodist Episcopal Church in America"—General Conference Journals had the full title "The Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States of America"—So legal documents—The Church was in the United States of America and was an American Church.

XIV. THE TWENTY-FIVE ARTICLES . . . 186

Their titles and scope—Their principal teachings—The full text of the Articles—Not intended to cover everything but certain basal principles—An added series of beliefs—Other doctrines in other standards—The Articles go down to the foundations of Christian faith, such as God, Christ, the Holy Scriptures, etc.—Coke and Asbury's "Notes to the Discipline"—Doctor Robert Emory's observations—Actions of General Conferences of 1796 and 1800—Discipline of 1798 —The Bishops' Annotations on the Twenty-five Articles of Religion.

XV. RELATED FORMULARIES . . 202

Certain ascertained facts should be grouped together and their relation should be seen—First was the preached doctrines; second, these doctrines in the conversation and thought of the people; and, third, these doctrines written,

printed, and circulated—There were the printed documents: the General Rules, the Conference Minutes, Wesley's Fifty-two Sermons, and Wesley's Notes on the New Testament, all of which had appeared before Wesleyan Methodism reached America—They were always recognized by American Methodism and were carried into the Methodist Episcopal Church—Those who acknowledged these standards and held these doctrines made the new Church—The Church was an evolution but the same life continued—Various features continued without any reënactment—The Articles of Religion were added—The organizing conference adopted "The Sunday Service. With other Occasional Services," with its new formularies—But it was not intended that the old doctrines should be given up and the Conference did not give up the old standards—The deed of the Ebenezer Church of Philadelphia, in 1790—The Articles of Religion were added standards of doctrine.

XVI. STATUTORY DEFENSE OF THE DOCTRINAL STANDARDS 209

The Articles of Religion were doctrinal standards, and the utterance of the Church and were to be respected by all who chose to be in the Church—They became part of the constitutional law and were obligatory upon all who were in the Church—This was speedily and specifically asserted in the legal statutes—The law of 1792 declared it an actionable and punishable offence to hold and teach doctrines confrary to the Articles—This is an additional proof that the Articles were authoritative standards—Subsequent modifications made the case stronger—The law in its present form as to conference members and as to local preachers—The statute law protects the doctrines—Every preacher and every member in the Church has vowed conformity to "the doctrines of the Holy Scriptures as set forth in the Articles of Religion of the Methodist Episcopal Church" and promised to obey its laws—They are binding.

XVII. CONSTITUTIONAL PROTECTION OF THE STANDARDS 217

Some years after invoking the statute law in defense of the Articles of Religion the Church placed them also under the protection of its Constitution and made them a part of the Constitution—From the beginning the Articles were in the organic law and the Church always had a constitution of some sort—In the first formally written constitution, in 1808, which created the delegated General Conference, a limiting provision protecting the Articles against even the General Conference was inserted and there it has remained ever since—It read, and reads: "The General Conference shall not revoke, alter, nor change our Articles of Religion"—

The intention was to make them permanent—The General Conference could not change them in any way and could not permit any individual, committee, or commission to change them directly or indirectly—The restriction proves that the Articles were standards of doctrine—The restriction in the Constitution also prohibited the General Conference from establishing "any new standards or rules of doctrine contrary to our present existing and established doctrine," as they were in 1808—The same still exist and are to be respected.

XVIII. EXISTING AND ESTABLISHED STANDARDS . 225

The first constitutional limitation prohibited the General Conference from interfering with the Articles of Religion—The delegated General Conference was not the doctrine-making power of the Church—It could not modify the Articles and it could not establish "any new standards or rules of doctrine contrary to our present existing and established standards of doctrine"—What were the present existing and established standards of doctrine at that time, namely in 1808?—Were they something more than the Articles of Religion?—The Church had Wesley's Fifty-two Sermons, Wesley's "Notes on the New Testament," etc.—It had the formularies in Wesley's Service Book, "The Sunday Service"—It had the Liturgy with the Apostles' Creed, the Sacramental Services and other formulations containing doctrinal statements—Doctor Daniel Curry on "The Ritual"—The commission of the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, held, as Doctor Rembert G. Smith says, that "the Ritual is a part of the doctrinal Constitution of the Church"—The standing of the Catechism at that time—Wesley's Catechism—"Instructions for Children"—Abbé Fleury and M. Poiret—Rev. N. Curnock—Rev. John Fletcher—Wesley's remark—Rev. Luke Tyerman's observation—British Minutes and the "Instructions"—Wesley's exhortation—Disciplines 1785-1789 on the "Instructions"—Disciplines of 1800 and 1808 on the Catechisms—Bishop Simpson—All doctrinal standards were protected.

XIX. DOCTRINES AND DISCIPLINE 238

The "Book of Discipline" or "The Discipline"—Its full title is "Doctrines and Discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church"—The title of the first "Form of Discipline"—In 1786 called "The General Minutes," "forming a Constitution"—In 1787, "A Form of Discipline"—In 1790 there was added "Comprehending the Principles and Doctrines of the Methodist Episcopal Church in America"—In 1792, "The Doctrines and Discipline"—Authoritative documents and doctrines though not in the Discipline—The General

Rules, the Articles of Religion, the Ritual—The Sunday Service—Doctrinal inserts into the Discipline—Doctrinal tracts—Taken out in 1812—Jesse Lee's motion—To be printed separately—The rank of these tracts—Jesse Lee's expression—Never had the authority of the Articles and the other standards—The standard doctrines in the Discipline.

XX. DOCTRINAL OBLIGATIONS OF THE MEMBERSHIP 249

Does any doctrinal obligation rest on the lay members?—If not there might be doctrinal anarchy—Membership carries with it the duty of conformity—If there is no law to the contrary this presumption holds—The Articles and other standards were for the entire Church—The specific law of 1792—Amendments thereto—As it stood in 1864—Members could be expelled for "inveighing against" the doctrines of the Church—The law strengthened in 1912—The Church does not deal judicially against unexpressed thinking but against expressed antagonism—The Church always demanded some examination of the doctrinal attitude of candidates for admission—The Ritual of 1864—The law of 1784—The law of 1840—Correctness of faith was and is required—Members are to accept and respect the doctrines of the Church.

XXI. COMPLEMENTAL NATURE OF THE STANDARDS 260

The standard doctrines of Methodism are found in various documents—Held to be an advantage—Present truth in different lights—The Articles contain fundamentals of Protestant Christianity—Some things not in one formulation may be in another—Wesley's Sermons present doctrines with a Scriptural relation and an application to the living generation—Wesley's Notes on the New Testament present doctrines as a Scriptural interpretation—Again doctrines were presented in other ways in the early Minutes, in the Liturgy, and in the Ritual—Principal Shaw on the advantage of the several standards—Doctor Harrison on the same point—Professor Burwash on these standards—Methodism is not limited to a single formulation but with different standards they are complemental to each other.

XXII. INTERPRETING WESLEY 270

Wesley was a voluminous writer and lived into his eighty-eighth year—A distinction was made between his official standards and his other utterances—Wesley lived long and wrote much—In the course of years he modified some of his statements—He should not be held to his early and abandoned views but should be judged by his later or final expression—Wesley was always a student and a growing man—Wesley on Christian Perfection and spreading Scriptural Holi-

ness—In examining candidates for the ministry—Going on to Perfection—Wesley's simplest statement of the doctrine—Change in verbal expression may not be an essential change in view—Safer to take Wesley's specific and studied statement rather than a casual remark—Wesley's most condensed summary of doctrine.

XXIII. EFFECTS OF METHODIST DOCTRINES . . 278

The proof of power is the doing—Methodist doctrine responds to that test—Its power to convince men of sin and to win men from sin—The statistics of world-wide Methodism prove the effectiveness of its doctrines—Observation of Green, the historian—Why this potency?—First, the truth preached; Second, the way it was preached—Overcame formality and revived the Churches—Saved England and its Churches—Effect on society—Even political benefit—Work in America—Remark of Bishop Hendrix—Emphasizes the force of Methodist doctrine—Effect on the doctrinal beliefs of other denominations—On Calvinism—Methodism's philosophy—Observation of Bishop Hendrix—Testimony of Professor Austin Phelps—The great victory of Methodist Arminianism—Changed Congregational Creed—The Free Church of Scotland—The Presbyterian Church's qualification of the Confessions—Its "Declaratory Statement"—Doctrines that produced such results possess great potency—They are the winning doctrines and the world needs them.

XXIV. ARE NEW STANDARDS NEEDED? . . 297

Why should the question be asked?—Doctrinal standards should have the element of permanence—They should not be easily disturbed—Extreme circumstances might justify the inquiry—Moral and religious truth remains true—If Methodist doctrines were true at the beginning they remain true—A mere question of literary form may not justify a change in the standards—The motive back of a desire to change expressions should be carefully scanned—The standards are comprehensive and comprehensible—That they contain much that belongs to general Christianity is not an objection, but in their favor—Wesley sought not the new but the true—He sought that which would stand the test of Scripture and reason—The Articles of Religion and the Apostles' Creed identified Methodism with the historic Christian Church—The standards present doctrines from different points of view and make them easily understood—Doctor Burwash on sermonic forms of doctrine—Doctor John Miley on the doctrines of Methodism—Plain people as well as scholars have been able to distinguish Methodist doctrines—Remark of Bishop Hendrix—Methodism possessed a theological system before it had an organization—Professor Burwash's grouping of Wesleyan principles—The

doctrines were understandable and preachable, convincing and persuasive—There is no practical necessity for changing the standards—Dangers lurk in changing expressions—There is no general desire for change—Question as to a restatement in the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, but faith in the Articles—Doctor Tillett's statement—Proposition declined by the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church—Bishop Hendrix urges the preaching of Methodist doctrines—New standards not needed.

XXV. CHANGES SHOULD BE SCRUTINIZED . . 323

Doctrinal standards should be protected—One way is to scrutinize proposed changes—Even modifications previously made should be studied—Ascertain whether mistakes have been made—An illegal act is not a legal precedent—Changes must be made constitutionally—Illegal changes are possible—The General Conference cannot change the doctrines—It cannot authorize any agent to do so—An unconstitutional change is null and void—Can the Sovereign power of the entire Church modify the standards of doctrine?—Testing revisions—The Ritual and the Catechism—What is the status of changes made in an unconstitutional manner?—These questions are vital—Proposed changes should be challenged.

XXVI. DANGERS TO BE GUARDED AGAINST . . 330

The good, the vital, and the true are liable to attack—So the form of truth called religious doctrine—Attacks vary in form and method—Defence is necessary—Defences for doctrinal standards of Methodism—Standards not exempt from attack from within as well as from without—Doubts as to unanimity of support—Insidious influences—Really against the essentials of Christianity—A limited but assertive antagonism—Causes—The Church must defend itself—Individual lawlessness as to doctrine means anarchy—Would weaken the foundations of the Church—Methodism not narrow but insists on the fundamentals—Recognizes private judgment but requires conformity within the Church—Irregular and illegal ways by which doctrinal belief may be subverted—General Conference cannot legally but might imagine a Conference that would err—How check or correct such illegal actions—Indirect modifications of doctrine—Popular conceptions against legal standards—Supposed official sanction of inaccurate or false doctrinal expressions nevertheless illegal and not authoritative—Church must be alert to promptly prevent or correct indirect and illegal action and erroneous expressions—Erroneors teachings may appear in printed articles, in sermons, and in other addresses—These should be challenged.

XXVII. CLOSING OBSERVATIONS . . 340

Recapitulation of facts and principles—Reasons why the Church expects and demands respect for its doctrines from those within it—The Church prohibits the dissemination of contrary doctrines—The objector who declares there are no distinctively Methodistic standards—The fundamental doctrines of the general Christian Church have been adopted by Methodism and are Methodistic—It shares the common heritage but has peculiar presentations—Citations from a recent book—"As to the Person of Christ"—Presented in the Articles, Wesley's Sermons, and Wesley's Notes—The Articles and other formulations are standards—Agreement is expected and asked of all—What can be said of those who have an antagonistic attitude?—Momentary mental conditions—The Church has its rights—Without respect for the doctrines the Church will deteriorate—Otherwise there will be confusion, conflict, and anarchy—The Church must be more than a mere organization—It must have faith and spiritual life—John Wesley's fear for the Methodists—Form of Religion without the power—Doctrine must be preserved—Duty of all classes to know and maintain the doctrines—Paul's exhortation.

INDEX 351

I

RELIGIOUS BELIEFS

BELIEF is common to humanity. So all men have some form of faith, though it may be fluctuating.

All men believe, even when the faith is a negative. Hence, when a man denies that he believes some particular thing, he has a very positive belief that he disbelieves. In this general sense all human beings are believers.

Faith is part of man's nature and one of his working forces, so that without some faith human life would be torture and impracticable, and the individual would be abnormal.

A man must believe in, or about, himself, and he must believe in, and about his fellows, and a thousand other things, including his material environment and beyond. Hence man cannot be an absolute agnostic. He may have his perplexities and periods of mental confusion, and, perhaps, frequently change his beliefs, but he does, and must, believe something. In this sense man by his very nature is a believer. He cannot prevent it. He must believe, or disbelieve, something, and even to disbelieve involves a negative belief which may be a very positive one.

Thus man by instinct, perception, reason, or impartation from outside himself, is a believer, and common observation shows that as a matter of fact all human

beings have many beliefs which, though they may greatly vary, nevertheless contain and manifest the essential elements of faith.

Man also believes in many different lines or spheres. He believes in the material and in the non-material. He believes in the material around him which he can test by touch, or sight, or in some other physical way, and he believes in that which he cannot physically test. He believes in what may be seen, and in what he cannot see with the bodily eye. He believes in matter which his hand can touch, and he believes in mind which is beyond the test and response of his physical faculties.

For the same essential reasons, all peoples have some form or degree of religious belief, which may be exceedingly crude, or which may be highly developed, and this class of belief is needed by the human race as are other forms of faith, and particularly, because man's religious nature affects all the rest of his nature.

Religious beliefs are necessary for individuals and equally necessary for groups, or collections of individuals, and for every department and relation of humanity. Religious faith is needed by the single individual, among a few associates, in the family, in the small community, in the state, in the nation and, indeed, everywhere from the isolated individual to the whole mass of humanity whatever may be the isolation or the aggregation.

Without religious beliefs there can be no religion, and, as there can be no religion without religious beliefs, there can be no theology without faith in a *theos* —God.

Then, from the conception of God, and that which

relates to God, will come the character of internal worship and the form of the external rites and ceremonies.

As every individual must believe in something, so every Church, which, by the way, is a collection of individuals in an organic relation, must have some religious faith or faiths.

A Church, indeed, cannot exist without a belief, or beliefs, of a religious character. Every Church is built on some accepted faith, and every Church is bound and held together by its primary, or common, religious doctrines. This is true of any religion, and it is manifestly true that a Christian Church is built on Christian beliefs, and that the subdivisions of the Christian Church, called denominations, differ chiefly because of the different emphasis placed on particular items of faith.

The importance of right beliefs in any realm must be admitted, but the importance is infinitely greater in the matter of religious beliefs than in all other forms of faith, and this, which is true of the individual, is equally true of the religious organization.

It is important what one believes, and especially as to religious doctrines. In the Book of Proverbs it is written: "For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he" (Proverbs xxiii. 7).

The inner thought affects the outer life. The pagan, with his pagan belief, lives like a pagan, while the Christian, with his better belief, lives like a Christian. Assuming that they are equally sincere, they differ in conduct because they differ in their faith.

It does make a great practical difference what a man believes, and it is equally important what a Church believes.

A Church is an association of individuals—a body corporate—and has its own individuality, and its own individual action. Though made up of individuals, yet by the nature of their combination, it becomes a composite individual with its own individuality. It thinks collectively as an individual, and acts with its collective individuality. So, like an individual, a Church in its action is influenced by what it thinketh in its heart, while its beliefs as to religious doctrine mold the organism and give the Church its distinguishing characteristics.

A Church must have some fixed faith and some religious opinions that are regarded as settled.

We need something fixed if we are to reason as to theories, or as to practice, or to reach and retain the truth. Something must be known, or taken for granted, as a starting point, even though it may not be fully comprehended by all. Thus the child must memorize the multiplication table, though it may not be completely understood, or its purpose fully mastered. Even the man of science must start with something fixed, and, if he cannot get a proved fact, he will invent, or use, an hypothesis.

The same general principle is true as to religious doctrines. Something must be accepted as a basis, and a Church must have its basal beliefs.

To have nothing fixed, settled, accepted, or agreed upon as to doctrines in a Church means diversity in view, contradiction in statement, confusion in thought, and strife among those in the same ecclesiasticism, and the tendency in that is toward anarchy and disruption.

Even if an isolated individual may possibly get along

without a fixed creed or anything fixed in his creed, as some vainly imagine, it is certain that such a condition will not do for a religious organization, for a religious organization cannot be held together without something fundamental in doctrine on which there is a common agreement. Neither can there be progress in the truth unless there is something fixed from which to move.

Even in religion something is a basal fact, and something has always been true, though in the realm of religion the nature of the evidence to prove the fact may be different from the proof of a physical fact.

So the Church must hold to something as settled, and must designate what in religion it regards as fundamental facts and the basis of doctrinal belief.

Groups of people, large or small, in frequent and close religious association, have common beliefs, which are commonly recognized, and which exercise an influence over the associated mass. This may readily be seen in associations which are called religious denominations or churches.

A Church implies a belief, or beliefs of a religious character, and a Christian Church implies Christian beliefs.

A Church, which is an aggregation of individuals, or it may be an aggregation of congregations, which themselves are made up of individuals, to be cohesive, must have a common agreement, or understanding, as to the common belief or beliefs of the individuals, or, as the case may be, of the grouped congregations.

For the common understanding, and to prevent misunderstanding, there should be somewhere a distinct statement or formulation of these common beliefs, duly recognized by the Church or some proper authority

therein. Experience has proven the necessity of the doctrines and their due recognition.

These common Christian beliefs in a Christian Church which have been thus formulated or stated, and authoritatively adopted, or duly recognized, by the Church, become its rule for teaching or expression of religious doctrines, and its standard both for faith and for moral and religious practice.

These stated beliefs may have a recognized maximum, or a minimum, or they may range from a maximum down to a minimum number of specified beliefs, as may be agreed upon by the proper authority, for the purpose of holding the people together consistently for Christian truth and Christian living.

Religious beliefs may be stated separately and they may or may not be in harmony. Indeed it may happen that particular beliefs may be contradictory and antagonistic to each other, but, on the other hand, beliefs may be grouped together so that they will form a system more or less consistent in itself, or have a perfectly logical harmony. To group conflicting teachings together would be to create a destructive weakness that would prevent the construction of a consistent and permanent theological system. So care is taken generally to avoid such a self-destroying collocation of beliefs.

These formulations of faith, or these standards of religious doctrines may be constructed, or grow, or come about, in different ways, both formally and informally.

Thus Churches may form around a preëxisting belief, which they formally or informally recognize, and make it the standard of its doctrine; or a Council, Conference, or Convocation may formally draw up, and by vote adopt, by its authority, or that of its sovereign

constituency, as its doctrinal standard; or the body ecclesiastic may cause the doctrinal declarations to be duly framed; or some recognized religious leader may, by his writings or other utterances, create a body of religious doctrines which his followers may formally or informally, but actually, accept, and to which others from time to time may be attracted and adhere.

Thus in various ways standards of religious doctrine may be begun and be developed, and, though varying in method of origination, construction, and acceptance, have legal authority to those within the religious organization.

These authoritatively formulated, legally adopted, or duly recognized religious doctrines, though in different forms or no particular form, that is to say formal or informal, are standards of doctrine to be observed as models of doctrinal expression, but, more than this, these doctrinal standards, having received due recognition by the Church, have an obligatory power over those who are within the denomination.

A belief authoritatively stated, or formulated, no matter in what form, becomes a doctrine, or teaching, or dogma, and because of its authority demands respect.

When one formally, or precisely, states his belief on a point of religion, if he spoke in Latin, he might begin with the word "*Credo*," which means, "I believe," and, so, a statement of religious belief is called a creed. Thus the Apostles' Creed begins with *Credo*, I believe—"I believe in God the Father Almighty," etc.

Doctor Schaff's definition of a creed is: "A statement of belief on any subject . especially, a formal statement of religious belief; a 'form of words, setting forth with authority certain articles of belief

which are regarded by the framers as necessary for salvation, or at least for the well-being of the Christian Church.' "[1]

So when religious beliefs are phrased, or formulated, with a degree of exactness, like a definition or formal proposition, and by proper authority, they become a creed, or, more briefly, we may say, a formulated faith becomes a creed.

Religious faiths authoritatively phrased, or formulated, become a creed, or confession of faith, and the doctrinal points, stated with more or less fullness and by authority, become a standard of doctrine for the Church, or religious denomination, that framed or accepted them.

Such an exposition of beliefs, forming a standard of doctrine, is as necessary for a Church as basal political principles formed into a Constitution are necessary to the existence and welfare of a Commonwealth, or a nation, and a Church cannot be homogeneous and hold together without doctrinal standards, any more than it can without fundamental principles of government.

These formulated beliefs become the standard of doctrinal teaching in the denomination, and all statements of doctrine are to be brought into comparison with these doctrinal standards, somewhat as instruments used for weighing and measuring are to be tested by the weights, measures, and scales which are carefully guarded by the national or state government, that the others in common use may be equally accurate, and, as the civil government guards its standard weights and measures, and demands that all similar instruments for like purposes shall exactly correspond with the govern-

[1] Dr. Philip Schaff: "The Creeds of Christendom," Vol. I, p. i.

ment's standards, so the Church protects its standards of doctrine and requires that all statements of doctrine shall correspond with the Church's standards, and, if it is alleged that certain statements vary from the standards, the test by comparison with the standards may be compelled and judgment pronounced accordingly.

Doctrinally the standard is the thing constitutionally agreed upon, and to it conformity is required, and this is done, first because the standard is believed to contain the truth, and, secondly, that by this common agreement and basal truth, the people with common doctrines may be held together, for otherwise there would be disagreements and the centrifugal force within the Church would overbalance the centripetal, and the component parts of the Church would break to pieces and fly apart.

The creed, or standard, or constitutional agreement on doctrine, as reason and observation show, are absolutely necessary. As Principal Shaw has said:

"Some sort of a creed is essential to every religious or ecclesiastical organization. A Deistic Club announces its doctrinal tests in the single proposition, I believe in God; a Humanitarian Club, in the declaration, I believe in Man. An independent congregation, untrammelled by any external authority, lays down its platform, possibly, in three or four brief articles, acceptance of which in form or substance is implied in membership. Harmony with principles held in common is essential to all organization. There is, therefore, no need of apologizing for creeds. They are a simple and palpable necessity."[1]

[1] Rev. Principal William I. Shaw, D. D., LL. D.: "Digest of the Doctrinal Standards of the Methodist Church"; Toronto, William Briggs, 1895, p. ix.

The New Testament makes much of doctrine and of properly expressed or formulated doctrine. Thus Paul writes to Timothy: "Give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine" (1 Tim. iv. 13), and to Titus he says: "Speak thou the things which become sound doctrine" (Titus ii. 1). Again Paul said to Timothy: "Hold fast the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus" (2 Tim. i. 13). Or, as the American Standard Revision renders it: "Hold fast the pattern of sound words which thou hast heard from me."

There was not only "sound doctrine" but the sound doctrine was to be expressed in right words—"the form of sound words." The sound doctrine was to be expressed in the right verbal form, and "the form of sound words" which the Apostle Paul had given was "the pattern of sound words" which was the model to be copied. So to speak, "the form of sound words" was the standard of doctrinal expression.

In Romans (vi. 17) we read: "Ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you"; or, as the American Revision has it: "Ye became obedient from the heart to that form of teaching whereunto ye were delivered," and in the margin for "form" is substituted the word "pattern."

So that not only was the truth generally expressed, but there was "sound doctrine," and the doctrine had a verbal formulation in "the form of sound words," which had been received, and this form was a "pattern" for those who presented the doctrine to others.

The doctrine is the teaching and the standard of doctrinal expression was "the form (or pattern) of sound words." Not only was the doctrine to be

sound, but its verbal statement was to be in harmony with the authoritative form received from the Apostles. So the early Church had its verbal standards, which were important then and are important now.

So to inveigh against dogma, simply because it is dogma, or doctrine formally stated, is essentially to rail against the Apostle's injunction to "Hold fast the form (or pattern) of sound words," which Timothy had received from Paul. While in some directions, in later times, there may have been too much dogma, it does not follow that there should be no dogma when the word is properly used. Flying from one extreme to another is usually an unsafe course.

Antagonism to dogma is sometimes an unintelligent objection to the word itself rather than to that which it implies, and such objectors should start their inquiry by learning the meaning of the word dogma.

In the Latin and in the Greek the word is the same, *dogma*, Greek δογμα, an opinion, and the Greek is from dokeo, δοκειν, to think, and the dogma is "that which seems good." So dogma has been defined as "Any settled opinion"; "a principle or doctrine propounded or received on authority"; "a system of established principles or tenets, especially religious ones"; and in its theological use it has the idea of an opinion or interpretation formulated by authority, as Matthew Arnold says, a "doctrine determined, decreed, received."

Another defines it as "a statement of religious faith or duty formulated by a body possessing or claiming authority to decree or decide"; or, again, "In theology a dogma, in this sense, may be a doctrinal proposition formulated from the Scriptures, in which case its au-

thority is regarded as divine; or a decree or decision of the Church, in which case its authority is human." In the former instance dogma would cover what Doctor Shedd terms "propositions formulated from inspired data."[1]

Others use the word dogma to cover "the whole body or system of Christian doctrine, as accepted either by the Church at large or by any branch of it."

Following these definitions, no ground for objection to the word dogma appears, and no valid objection lies to creed or doctrine, or standard of doctrine.

So it is evident that much that is said against dogma has in it neither knowledge, sound philosophy, or common sense, but is contrary to experience and reason. As to the soundness of a given dogma or creed that is another matter, but there need be no vital objection to the general idea of dogma, creed, or other formal statement of doctrine. Indeed a concise, but ample, and clearly drawn, definition is to be desired by those who agree and those who dissent, for it makes for clearness of comprehension.

To have an explicit statement of the fundamental doctrines of a denomination is a great advantage to all concerned, as may easily be seen.

When the beliefs are authoritatively phrased, or formulated, they become the Church's creed, and the fundamental faiths, officially or authoritatively phrased or formulated, become a standard, or standards, of doctrine for all connected with the Church.

Then the person who proposes to join the Church may know for what the denomination stands doctrinally and for what he may expect to hear in pub-

[1] Dr. W. G. T. Shedd: "Dogmatic Theology," p. 11.

lic and in private from its ministry; the preacher knows what he should present in the way of doctrinal teaching, and at least know what he must not present; and if a question arises as to the theological soundness of any doctrinal utterance an appeal can be taken to the standards, just as weights, measures, and scales may be put to the test by comparison with the carefully guarded and standard instruments of the civil government.

The standards of religious doctrine, in a body that has made them, or has accepted them, are both a mutual agreement and a personal contract on the part of those who are in, or come into the body, and the being in, or coming in, creates both a moral and a legal obligation to respect and conform to these standards on the part of those within the ecclesiasticism, and as long as they remain therein.

As the members of the body politic are bound by the principles and provisions of the Constitution of the country, so, with equal justice and necessity, are the constituent parts of an ecclesiastical body under obligation to conform to the doctrinal teachings of the religious body to which they belong.

Thus the standards of religious doctrine control the professed beliefs and the doctrinal teachings in the Church, much as the specifications in a constitution control the government in its legislative, executive, and judicial action, and the citizens in their conduct.

It must be plain then that in the Church a standard of doctrine is needed as a constitution is needed in a state, and one in the Church, who goes contrary to the standard of doctrine, is like one who violates the political constitution under which he lives.

Just as a constitution should contain a few essential principles of government, and as few as possible for completeness, so, generally speaking, a standard of doctrines, or a creed, should be limited as far as possible to simple essentials.

The standard needs little, if anything more than the fundamentals, but without the fundamentals it is worthless, for the creed of a so-called Christian Church that does not contain basal Christianity is a structure without a foundation rock on which to rest. It is built on shifting sand.

While simple, and as brief as the circumstances will permit, nevertheless the creed should be sufficiently comprehensive as to embrace these essential principles of the Christian religion.

Any religion must have, as its first thought, faith in the Supreme Being. Judaism must have its Jehovah, the Lord God, while Christianity must have not only God, but also Christ, the Christ of the Old and the New Testament. So Judaism must have the Holy Scriptures of the Hebrew times, while Christianity must have the New Testament writings as well, and out of them grow the doctrines.

A Church must have faith in God, and faith in a divine revelation.

The Christian Church bases itself on the New Testament and the Old Testament, taken together and commonly called The Bible, and the different branches of the Church divide chiefly as they differently interpret the Scriptures, but, in them all, doctrine is the main thing.

The value and necessity of standards of religious doctrine for any kind of a Church is apparent. This is so no matter what may be the form of its polity, as has

been shown. Even the separate or independent Church requires it for the assurance of harmony within its own little membership and in view of currents and cross-currents of opinion outside, but it is especially important that a great denomination embracing many Churches, in many and distant places under the same ecclesiastical government, should have well settled standards of doctrine; that they may have the truth well expressed, and by the common truth be united into a doctrinal unity.

The Rev. George Armstrong Bennetts, of England, has very clearly expressed this recently in his declaration as to "The necessity of a general agreement in doctrine to the maintenance of a connexional system," when he says: "If we are to work harmoniously together, it is impossible that preachers occupying the same pulpits can long keep the flock together, if they are preaching doctrines diametrically opposed on the great central themes." [1]

Standards of doctrine are needed by individuals, by local and independent churches, but more particularly by great connectional Churches having a common and centralized government. They are needed by all.

[1] Rev. George A. Bennetts: "The Doctrinal Crisis in Wesleyan Methodism"; London.

II

HISTORIC STANDARDS IN CHRISTIAN CHURCHES

DOCTRINAL formulations are not peculiar to modern times. Indeed there is strong reason to believe they were found in the very early period of the Christian Church.

Beginning with the words of Jesus and with the spoken discourses and narrations of the early disciples of the Christ, and following with the Gospels and the other New Testament writings, the Church had its standards. Then, as the primitive Church passed on from the living presence of the Apostles who had seen Jesus, it is manifest that questions would soon arise as to the exact meaning of spoken words of Christ and his first followers which had been transmitted and oft repeated, and as to the precise meaning of statements contained in the Gospels, the Epistles, and other Scriptures, and also questions as to usages of the Church which had come down to their day.

These questions were likely to evoke differences of opinion, and these differences, or uncertainties of interpretation, as to the writings treasured by the Church, and as to expressions or things relating to the Church, would naturally develop a desire for the Church, or those it would recognize as having knowledge and authority, to formulate an explanation, or interpretation,

of these matters that would harmonize conflicting views, settle strife, and be regarded as having authority then and for the future. A conspicuous instance is seen in the calling of the first council in Jerusalem and in its decisions, as given in the fifteenth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles.

Or those having influence and authority might have seen the necessity for, and taken the initiative in, constructing condensed statements or explanations touching vital matters.

We know that Paul put the truth into a "pattern of sound words," which were received, repeated, and probably copied and duplicated time and again. That the Apostle gave a "form of sound words" shows the importance of the verbal expression of the truth, and that the "sound doctrine" needed presentation in "sound words."

Then the instructions given the catechumens would naturally tend to concise formulations of what were regarded as elementary and essential truths as to the Christian religion.

In these and other ways, interpretations of the truth must have begun, even in the very early periods of the Church, resulting in common forms more or less fixed.

So it is not hard to believe that close to the beginning of the Christian Church credal forms gradually grew up and crystallized, each being a condensed formulation of the sayings of the Apostles, or other early teachers, or what the Church itself taught, and which was accepted as the truth, or the correct interpretation of the narratives as originally given.

Thus was created what was called "sound doctrine" expressed in "the form of sound words," and these

declarations were recognized as standards of Christian doctrine.

The *Didache*—or Teaching of the Twelve Apostles, a very ancient work, is a suggestion in this direction.

This went on through the generations, and, as new questions arose, there were new or additional investigations as to the truth and as to what the Church should accept as the truth in particular cases, and the answers were given in new decisions and formulations, or in new, or additional statements, which, under various titles, such as creeds, confessions, or articles of religion, became standards of doctrine, sometimes promulgated by the chief personage in the ecclesiastical government, sometimes in the decrees or canons of Church councils, and sometimes by the order of other authoritative bodies representing the Church.

Such doctrinal deliverances are always of decided interest, and usually of great value. Sometimes they show the logical development of human thought, sometimes the peculiar processes of man's mentality, and sometimes the effects of environment and the pressure of dominating influences, while at other times they reveal a hidden truth, or restore one that has been forgotten, or present a fuller and more accurate interpretation of partially understood truth, or stamp a doctrine with the proper emphasis, or place it in its proper perspective.

By way of illustration we should recall some of these formulations of the ages.

What is regarded as the earliest surviving form of a Christian creed is that which is commonly called the Apostles' Creed, accepted as agreeable to their teachings, though it has been doubted that the Apostles

wrote it, or wrote it in that exact form. Nevertheless it has been used by the Churches for centuries "because it is a brief sum of the Christian faith, agreeable to the Word of God, and anciently received in the Churches of Christ."

It has a place in the catechisms of various branches of the Christian Church, and is used in the baptismal confessions of many Churches, including the Greek, the Roman, the Lutheran, the Reformed, the Anglican, the Methodist Episcopal, the Protestant Episcopal, the Reformed Episcopal, and other Churches too numerous to mention.

As Doctor Philip Schaff has said, though it is "not in form the production of the Apostles, it is a faithful compend of their doctrines, and comprehends the leading articles of the faith in the triune God and his revelation, from the creation to the life everlasting, in sublime simplicity, in unsurpassable brevity, in the most beautiful order, and with liturgical solemnity; and to this day it is the common bond of Greek, Roman, and evangelical Christendom."

It has been held that the Apostles' Creed was developed between the first and the eighth centuries, but though there is not unanimous agreement as to its exact date, it seems perfectly plain that in some form it appeared at a very early period, and so early that the Apostles might have given the creed its initial form, or its earliest content and form were so like what the Apostles had taught, that it was quite a natural thing to say that the Creed was the Apostles'

The second great expression of Christian doctrine, in a similar formulation, is that which is called the Nicene Creed, or, as some prefer to term it, the Niceno-Con-

stantinopolitan Creed, which was adopted at the Council of Nice, A. D. 325, and enlarged at the Second Council of Constantinople, A. D. 381. It sets forth the view of the Church with regard to the person of Christ, in opposition to certain erroneous teachings, and especially those of Arianism.

The third in order of time among the great doctrinal statements is what is known as the Athanasian Creed, so called because, for some time, it was supposed to have been drawn up in the fourth century by Athanasius, but later, on various grounds, it has been denied that the creed was composed by Athanasius.

This creed is received by the Greek, the Roman, and the Anglican Churches, but not by the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America. The Protestant Episcopal Convention of 1785 expunged from the proposed Book of Common Prayer both the Athanasian and Nicene Creeds, whereupon the English bishops refused to consecrate the Protestant Episcopal bishops unless these creeds were restored. Then another convention was held the next year by the Protestant Episcopal Church and it restored the Nicene Creed, but "wholly refused to restore the Athanasian Creed," objecting particularly to the "damnatory clauses" which it contains.

On this compromise, the bishops were consecrated.

Another creed is the Chalcedon, conceded the date, 451.

Some would place this as the third in order, but all the great Churches have not received it as they have the Apostles' and the Nicene Creeds.

These three, or four, creeds, the Apostles', the Nicene, and the Athanasian Creeds, may be said to be

the ancient creeds of General Christendom, with a few qualifications such as have been indicated.

At the present time the various branches of the Christian Church have their recognized doctrinal formulations, generally embracing one or more of the ancient creeds, and also statements of later times.

Thus the Greek Church, the Roman Church, and the various Protestant Churches have their standards of doctrine, with essential differences of statement, according to their differences of view in regard to Christian teaching as to doctrine, polity, and to some extent as to the history and conception of the Church, and, especially, as to their acceptance and interpretation of the Scriptures.

The more venerable Churches, generally speaking, recognize of course one or more of the ancient creeds, but also have formulations of later date, and the creeds already mentioned have been classed as ecumenical, or belonging to the general and historic Church, particularly of some centuries ago.

The Armenian Church claims very great antiquity and that Armenia received Christianity from Bartholomew and Thaddeus, the latter being one of the seventy, though the Armenians maintain he was the apostle, and that he founded a Christian Church as early as A. D. 34. Certainly Christianity appeared in Armenia at an early period, but the connected ecclesiastical existence is regarded as beginning about the close of the third century under Gregory called the "Illuminator" who was consecrated bishop of Armenia in 302 A. D., but in subsequent times the Armenian Christians have been broken up into several bodies, some affiliating with the Greek Church and some with the

Latin, and there are efforts to develop a Reformed Church with some relations to the Reformed Churches of Europe and America.

The Armenians accepted the first three ecumenical Councils, and also the fifth, sixth and seventh, but rejected that of Chalcedon, the fourth, of A. D. 451. Gregory introduced the Nicene Creed, using the edition which contains the damnatory clause, and adding a conclusion of his own. With the Greek and other Oriental Churches, they reject the "*filio-que*," and from the Son, maintaining the procession of the Holy Ghost from the Father only.

The Greek Church has as doctrinal standards such formularies as The Orthodox Confession, prepared by Peter Mogilas, in 1643; The Decrees of the Synod of Jerusalem, or The Confession of Dositheus, in 1672; and The Russian Catechisms, in 1839.

The Roman Church has as its authoritative symbol, or confession of faith, the Decrees of Trent, or the acts of the Council of Trent, held in 1545–1563 A. D.

A summary of the doctrines contained in the canons of the Council of Trent was given in the creed issued by Pope Pius IV, in 1564, in the form of a papal bull, but which is spoken of as the creed of Pius IV This is introduced by the Nicene Creed, to which were added twelve articles, comprising the doctrines which the Church of Rome finally adopted after her controversies with the Protestant Reformers. This creed, and the "Canons and Decrees of the Council of Trent," are, by the Roman Church, acknowledged as authoritative.

With these should be considered the Roman Catechism of 1566, received with favor by the Dominicans,

but not with the Jesuits because of its Thomist or Augustinian views. Then there are two Bulls, The Bull *Cum occasione*, in 1653, and The Bull *Unigenitus*, in 1713. These Bulls condemn the Jansenists, and which some think virtually commit the Roman Catholic Church to Semi-Pelagianism. Finally, in the nineteenth century, there appeared The Dogma of the Immaculate Conception, in 1854; the Papal Syllabus of 1864; and The Vatican Decrees of 1870, including the dogma of the Infallibility of the Pope, namely "that the Pope cannot, when acting in his official character of supreme pontiff, err in defining a doctrine of Christian faith or rule of morals." That is, when he speaks *ex cathedra.*

The ecumenical Council of 1870 decreed this dogma of papal infallibility for the first time in the history of the Church of Rome.

The Roman Catholic Church recognizes all ancient Church creeds, and they are in constant liturgical and devotional use. The Apostles' Creed is recited at least twice daily. The Nicene Creed, as enlarged and used in the Council of Constantinople, A. D. 381, is used in the Mass on Sundays, certain Festivals, and often on other occasions. It has the addition of the words "and the Son" in the Article on the Holy Ghost—"who proceedeth from the Father and the Son," but the Church permits the United Greek Catholics and certain others to omit this addition in the recitation of this creed, "provided they admit the doctrine which it expresses." The Athanasian Creed is used also.

The Lutheran Church has as its chief standard the great confession of faith called the Augsburg Confes-

sion, with other declarations, including some by Luther and Melancthon, which, when put together, are called *Libri Symbolici Ecclesiæ Evangelicæ*—the symbolical books of the Evangelical Church.

Lutheranism presents the following list of doctrinal standards, namely: Luther's Catechisms, of 1529; The Augsburg Confession, of 1530; The *Confessio Variata*, of 1530, which is the Augsburg Confession enlarged by Philip Melancthon but which is not now accepted by Lutherans; The Smalcald Articles, of 1537; The *Formula Concordia*, of 1577, which was an attempt to meet errors of the Philippists, the name given the followers of Philip Melancthon, and views of Melancthon himself, especially as to the Eucharist, or Lord's Supper, and as to Synergism, or the doctrine of the working together of God and man in the regeneration of a human soul; and The Saxon Visitation Articles of 1592, which have been described as "Strongly anti-Calvinistic both as to the Eucharist and Predestination." The latter Articles, however, had only a limited local and temporary influence.

It was in 1580 that the Augsburg Confession, the Apology of the Augsburg Confession, the Smalcald Articles, the Catechisms of Luther, and the Formula of Concord were published together as the Book of Concord, or the Symbolical Books of the Evangelical Lutheran Church. The Lutherans recognize the three ecumenical creeds.

The Reformed Churches in Europe have their standards of doctrine, including the four Helvetic Confessions and the Heidelberg Catechism.

For the Reformed, or Calvinistic, bodies, there will be found the following list of formularies, namely:

The Confession of Basle, in 1534; The First Helvetic Confession, in 1536; The Catechism of Geneva, in 1541; The Zurich Consensus, of 1549; The Geneva Consensus, of 1552; The Gallican Confession, of 1559; The Scotch Confession, of 1560; The Belgic Confession, of 1561; The Heidelberg Catechism, of 1563; The Second Helvetic Confession, of 1566; The Canons of Dort, of 1619; The Westminster Confession, of 1647; The Cambridge Confession, of 1648; The Savoy Declaration, of 1658; The Boston Confession, of 1680; and The Saybrook Platform, of 1708.

Principal Shaw says: "The last four are Congregationalist, and represent that type of Church Polity. In the earlier Swiss Confessions, Zwinglian views of the Eucharist appear. With these exceptions the foregoing symbols set forth the Calvinistic view of Predestination, the Eucharist and Church Polity."[1]

The Presbyterian Church in the United States of America has as its great symbol of belief the Westminster Confession of Faith, but it should be remembered that the Presbyterian Church in this country, by recent enactments, has greatly qualified the extreme Calvinistic statements of the olden time.

With the Westminster Confession, the Presbyterians also join the two Catechisms, the Shorter and the Longer, as standards of doctrine.

For centuries the Church of England has had its Articles of Religion, which have been revised from time to time, and from time to time their number has been changed.

Before the Articles attained their present form as

[1] Rev. William I. Shaw, D. D., LL. D.: "Digest of Standards," pp. 133, 134.

the Thirty-nine Articles of Religion, they went through a long and varied process after the break with Rome.

There were The Ten Articles of Henry VIII, which have been described as "decidedly Romish, but with the King substituted for the Pope." Then came the Edwardine Articles, of 1543.

Later, in 1552, Articles were agreed to in the Convocation held in London, when they were drawn up in Latin, and, in 1563, they were made the Thirty-nine Articles.

In that transition period the Protestant Reformed Church of England was much more closely associated with the Reformed Churches of the Continent of Europe than with the Lutheran Church, and the great scholars of the Continental Reformed Churches had great influence in the molding of the Thirty-nine Articles of Religion.

Principal Shaw clearly states this point when he says: "The close relations between the Anglican Reformers of the sixteenth century and the Calvinists of the Continent are matters of historic certainty and gratifying familiarity. The names and works of Peter Martyr, Ochino, Bucer, Calvin and Bullinger were most potent in England in favor of evangelical religion. Calvin's Institutes and Catechism were text-books at Oxford and Cambridge. 13 Eliz., C. XII., provided for the appointment of Presbyterian ministers to Anglican parishes without reordination, and no calamity followed the many appointments made under this statute. John Knox was a chaplain of Edward VI, and was offered the bishopric of Rochester, which, however, he declined. Bishop Jewel in 1562 wrote to Peter Martyr concerning the Thirty-nine Articles, 'We have pared

everything to the very quick, and do not differ from you by a nail's breadth.' This was in the final revision of the Articles, and just before their ratification by Queen Elizabeth in 1563. The chief elements in these Articles, as to the Eucharist and Soteriology, are Calvinistic. At the same time all traces of Latin theology were not eliminated. The Articles were really abridged from the forty-two published in the reign of Edward VI, 1553, 'by royal authority.'"[1]

The Articles were revised in 1571 and were subscribed in both Latin and English.

Since the time of Archbishop Laud, and in a very decided degree in recent years, however, in the Anglican body, there has been a marked divergence from the Calvinistic Churches both as to Predestination and to Clerical Order.

After the Thirty-nine Articles came The Lambeth Articles, in 1595, and The Irish Articles, of 1615, both of which were Calvinistic as to Predestination and Election, and then followed The Anglican Catechisms of 1662.

The Thirty-nine Articles of "The Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America" closely follow the English Articles but vary in certain important particulars. Thus the VIIIth Article of the Protestant Episcopal form omits any reference to "Athanasius's Creed" as one that "ought thoroughly to be received and believed: for they (it) may be proved by most certain warrants of Holy Scripture," as the old Thirty-nine Articles declared of "the three creeds, Nice Creed, Athanasius Creed, and that which

[1] William I. Shaw, D. D., LL. D.: "Digest of Standards"; Toronto, pp. 14, 15.

is commonly called the Apostles' Creed." So the Protestant Episcopal Convention took out the so-called Creed of Athanasius in making up its Thirty-nine Articles of Religion.

In like manner the other denominations, too numerous to mention, have their standard statements of doctrine.

A standard of doctrine, therefore, is no new thing. It is ancient and it is modern, and as modern as it is ancient. It goes back quite to the beginning, and it is plain that the Church had verbal standards before standards were written for permanent preservation.

We have cited creeds and pointed to standards all along the centuries to demonstrate that they have been and are. No age has been without its standards of doctrine in some form, and doctrinal standards have been practically universal among the denominations. They do not belong merely to one period or one condition, but, in the very nature of things, are a universal necessity in every age and under every condition. Their form may change but the fact continues.

The object of a standard of doctrine is not to say everything that might be said, or to recite every item of possible belief, but to give the fundamental or essential points, sufficient to hold the Church to the truth, and yet allowing room for differences of view on non-essentials.

As already suggested, a constitution should mention as little as possible, and yet present all the necessary principles of government to guide, empower, and restrain both officers and people. So the ideal creed should not attempt to say every possible thing, but should say enough for the guidance of those in the ecclesiasticism as to the essentials of "sound doctrine."

Speaking of the Protestant Church, Doctor Shaw has well said: "At best its creed is presumably an honest attempt to condense into symbolic form such truths as it feels called upon to emphasize. Naturally the aim is to condense the most truth into smallest compass.

"On the whole, however, the briefest creeds have occasioned the most dissension. It has often been the case that the briefer the form the more uncertain has been its meaning. This is owing to the faltering weakness and inadequacy of language. The whole period of creed formation, from the Augsburgh Confession, 1530, to the Westminster Confession, 1647, inclusive—an age most prolific in creeds—is a running commentary on these statements." [1]

All of which implies that a standard should neither be too short nor too long.

As has been shown, these presentations of doctrine may appear under many forms.

There has been a typical form, but sometimes the standards of doctrine may not be in the form of Articles, Canons, Confessions, or precisely worded Creeds, but may be embodied in doctrinal treatises, in particular theological works, in sermons, or in other writings in which the doctrines are set forth.

Thus the standards of doctrine may be more or less formal, but they should be definite and by authority, though the authoritative form itself may vary. Thus they may be authoritatively adopted, for example, by the vote of an authoritative body, or they may be recognized in some other authoritative way, as, for example, by general consent or by long time usage or acceptance,

[1] Principal Shaw: "Digest of Doctrinal Standards"; Toronto, p. x.

there being no law or legal expression, or other standard formulation to the contrary, but informal, or formal, views or opinions cannot stand as against formulations that already have a proper legal standing.

Professor Shaw says: "It should be observed that in no Protestant Church are creeds exalted above the Holy Scriptures, or even made coördinate with the Scriptures. The Word of God is supreme. . . So we say that if a doctrine be Scriptural, it must be Methodist, for according to our standards the Bible is the sole rule of faith and practice." [1]

As a general statement it is correct to say that the Holy Scriptures are authoritative, but the formulated standards are the Church's interpretation of the Scriptures, which it recognizes as authoritative. If found to be a misinterpretation, that would be a good reason for a change, but the Church's formal interpretation of the Scripture is standard until the change is legally made. The assertion of an individual does not set aside the standard set by the Church. The Church is the judge for the Church, and the individual is not the judge for the Church. Otherwise nothing would stand against the notions of isolated individuals and the theology of the Church would be chaotic.

The standards of doctrine are interpretations of the statements and teachings of the Bible on the points presented. They should be succinct statements of the beliefs of the Church in language clear and easily understood, so that the interpretation which it is, shall need no reinterpretation. An interpretation that needs interpretation is no interpretation or a very faulty one.

[1] Rev. William I. Shaw, D. D., LL. D.: "Digest of Standards"; Toronto, p. xi.

Interpretations to have authority must end somewhere, and the standard itself is the interpretation that stands until something else is legally substituted.

The standards of doctrine, no matter how they may have legally become such, are entitled to respect, in the denomination to which they belong, and the standard is entitled to conformity by its clergy and laity as long as they remain in its membership.

III

THE METHODIST MOVEMENT

IN the year 1517, Martin Luther publicly began the Protestant Reformation in Germany, by nailing his ninety-five theses on the door of the castle church in Wittenberg.

That act challenged the claims of the papacy, and elevated the Scriptures to a position of supremacy in the determination of religious doctrine.

From that time more generally than for long centuries before the appeal has been to the Scriptures and there has been a greater effort to ascertain what the Scriptures really taught.

The Protestant doctrine rapidly spread throughout Germany and into other lands, including England and adjacent countries.

Henry VIII, of England, at first did not welcome the new faith, but, in the year 1521, the very year Luther appeared before the Diet in the City of Worms, vigorously opposed Protestantism by issuing his book on the Seven Sacraments, for which work Pope Leo X gave King Henry the title of "Defender of the Faith."

Naturally, with the King in the lead, there was strong opposition, in England, to the Reformed Religion, while similar bitterness was found also in Scotland.

In that part of the island, however, there arose a

reformer named Patrick Hamilton. He was born in 1503, and, after being educated at Saint Andrews, went to Germany where he imbibed the views of Luther, and became a professor at Marburg. Returning to his native land, he was made Abbot of Ferne, in the shire of Ross. There he promulgated the Reformed doctrines, and with such zeal that he was arrested, tried, and condemned to death, and on the first of March, 1527, in his twenty-fourth year, he was burned to death at the stake. His noble bearing during this ordeal made such an impression that many were led to inquire into the principles of Protestantism, and, as a result, abjured the papacy, so that a Roman Catholic said: "The smoke of Mr. Patrick Hamilton infected as many as it blew upon." So Patrick Hamilton of Scotland stands out as the first Protestant martyr in that country.

Henry VIII, the one time "Defender of the Faith," broke with the Pope, and gradually large numbers of the English people espoused the views of the Reformers on the Continent.

Thus the Protestant Reformation began to permeate the British Islands, and ultimately secured control.

In seven years after the burning of Hamilton, that is to say, in 1534, the English Parliament passed the Act of Supremacy which severed all connection with Rome.

The clergy in Convocation had already declared the King to be the supreme head of the Church of England, and now, in 1534, this act made the fact and title part of the law of the land, thus proclaiming the independence of the nation from any foreign jurisdiction, ecclesiastical or civil.

Through such events "The Protestant Reformed Religion," "Established by law," became the religion of England.

In the next hundred years there were many fluctuations in the political and ecclesiastical affairs of Great Britain.

Under Edward VI, Protestantism made progress and was getting a firm grip on the country, and, under the leadership of Archbishop Cranmer, was produced the English Liturgy, called the Book of Common Prayer. Under Queen Mary, the Roman Catholic, there was a reaction, and Romanism again wielded its power, and Protestants greatly suffered from its persecution, many being burned at the stake. When Queen Elizabeth ascended the throne of England Protestantism became supreme and so continued during her reign. It was in this period that Puritanism began to assert itself, and in course of time came Oliver Cromwell and The Commonwealth, and the execution of King Charles I. During these commotions many institutions were overturned. Then there came another reaction, with the recall of Charles II, and the restoration not only of the monarchy, but also of much of the old ecclesiasticism, which was followed by the Act of Uniformity and the persecution of non-Conformists.

Almost two centuries after the events of Henry VIII's time, another Reformation began in England, which reformation was needed to complete the reform of Henry VIII's time. That reformation in the sixteenth century was largely intellectual and external, while this of the eighteenth century was to be more spiritual and internal, although its results were to be seen in the external also but in a different sense.

The religious and moral condition of England had become most deplorable.

Referring to the early part of the eighteenth century, Isaac Taylor has said: "There was no philosophy abroad in the world—there was no *thinking* that was not atheistical in its tone and tendency."[1] This thinking of the age must have affected its morals and its religion, for in both these spheres conditions corresponded to the prevalent thinking.

Formality and spiritual deadness were only too common in the Churches. Says Green, the English historian: "Never had religion seemed at a lower ebb." Intrigue and corruption dominated politics, vice was brazen, and crime was rampant, while infidelity was popular.

In 1736, Bishop Butler, in one of his charges, lamented "the general decay of religion in the nation."

Montesquieu said: "There is no religion in England. . . . In France I am thought to have too little religion, but in England to have too much."

Archbishop Leighton confessed: "The Church is a fair carcass without a spirit," and Bishop Burnet said: "I cannot look on without the deepest concern when I see the imminent ruin hanging over the Church." Bishop Burnet also said he had observed, "Papists, Lutherans, Calvinists, and Dissenters, but of them all our clergy (of the Church of England) is much the most remiss in their labors, in private, and the least severe in their lives," and Voltaire, who was in England in 1736, says: "The Anglican clergymen frequent the taverns, because custom sanctions it, and if they

[1] Taylor's "Wesley and Methodism," p. 33.

get drunk, they do it seriously and incur no disgrace."

Carlyle, referring to the moral condition of the nation at that time, wrote: "The eighteenth was a 'skeptical' century; in which little word there is a whole Pandora's box of miseries. Skepticism means not intellectual doubt alone, but moral doubt; all sorts of *in*fidelity, *in*sincerity, spiritual paralysis. Perhaps in few centuries that one could specify since the world began was a life of heroism more difficult for a man. That was not an age of faith—an age of heroes!"

Doctor Gregory put the matter mildly when he said: "The moral condition of the country was such as to require a reëvangelization on the largest scale."

It was in 1521 that Henry VIII published his book in defense of Romanism. Almost two centuries after that, namely in 1720, a lad of seventeen years of age left the Charterhouse School, of London, to go to Christ Church, Oxford. That young man was to be the leader of the new reformation. It is of some interest to note that Queen Elizabeth died on the twenty-fourth of March, 1603, and this new reformer was born in 1703, just about a century later.

His name was John Wesley, a descendant of a long line of clergymen who were Oxford graduates, a number of whom had suffered for their convictions as non-Conformists. Six years later, in 1726, his brother, Charles Wesley, came up from the Westminster school, in London, to Christ Church, so that these brothers were in Oxford University at the same time.

They were connected with the Church of England, and their father, the Reverend Samuel Wesley, a learned and distinguished clergyman, and their remark-

able mother, Mrs. Susannah Wesley, the daughter of a prominent non-Conformist minister, in London, were also of the Established Church.

John and Charles Wesley exercised a marked moral and religious influence at Oxford.

Around the young Wesleys gathered other Oxford students, and together, at the university, the little company undertook to promote their own intellectual and religious welfare, and, outside their meetings, to do humanitarian work, such as visiting the sick, visiting persons in prison, caring for the needy, and even educating poor children.

So devoted were they to their studies, and to their church duties, that some, particularly students of Christ Church and Merton College, made flings at them, calling them the "Holy Club," "Sacramentarians," "Supererogation Men," "Bible Moths," "Bible Bigots," and "Methodists," but the two names that stuck most firmly were "The Holy Club" and "Methodists," and the latter is the name that has persisted, and which clung to the Wesley brothers, George Whitefield, and their followers. In particular, John Wesley was nicknamed "The Curator of the Holy Club," and also "The Father of the Holy Club," for he was its head.

From this it will be seen that the promoters of this religious movement did not invent, or choose, the title "Methodist," or "Methodism." On the contrary, it was thrust upon them by others, and John Wesley, when using the name, usually referred to his followers as "the people called Methodists," or "so called."

Charles Wesley, who was in the Holy Club from the beginning, stated that the name Methodist "was bestowed upon himself and his friends because of their

strict conformity to the method of study prescribed by the university." They observed the method laid down by the university authorities, and so they were termed Methodists.

In his address to King George II, John Wesley designated his followers as "the people in derision called Methodists," and, in his English Dictionary, he defined a Methodist as "one that lives according to the *method* laid down in the Bible."

Whatever may have been thought or intended at Oxford in the early years of the eighteenth century, Wesley and his followers made the title honorable by the marvellous work and astonishing success of Methodism over a great part of the world.

John Wesley, Charles Wesley, and George Whitefield became ordained clergymen of the Established Church, and entered upon their work with zeal. From the beginning their devotion was pronounced, and in their preaching there was a new evangelistic note which gave them a popular hearing, but which, to the clergy generally, was very objectionable.

The result was that in a short time the pulpits of the State Church were closed against them, and John Wesley found himself excluded from the pulpit of his university church and from other pulpits of the Establishment.

Thus prevented from preaching in these pulpits, but impressed by their divine call to preach, they went out into the fields, and the commons, and there the people came unto them, as the populace had come to Jesus, and there they preached to thousands, sometimes ten or twenty thousand, and even, it is said, to as many as forty thousand at one time.

While individuals of high position, and the masses generally, heard the Wesleys gladly, yet very often the mobs, instigated by others of considerable standing, would make brutal attacks upon them, so that their lives were many times in peril, but none of these things deterred them or their co-workers.

Gradually John Wesley gathered around him a number of regular clergymen and a host of other itinerant preachers who went here and there over the land preaching the same evangel.

As a result of these efforts, many were converted and led to live Christian lives, and some of the converts asked the Reverend John Wesley to be their leader and religious director.

He consented, and, in 1739, the first society was formed, and then another and another society was formed, until such societies were found in all directions, and Mr. John Wesley joined them together in what he called "The United Society," of which he was the chosen and constantly recognized head. In a few years he called his preachers together for consultation, and the Conference was inaugurated, and thereafter met annually, and, as time went on, the details of this new religious organization were gradually developed.

The Reverend John Wesley was not only a great evangelical preacher, producing effects which even the oratorical Whitefield did not equal, but he was a genius in organization. As the historian Macauley puts it, he had "a genius for government," and Matthew Arnold, viewing him from another side, said he had "a genius for godliness," while Robert Southey, who in his youth had seen him rather intimately, declared that John Wesley was "a man of great views, great energies, and

great virtues; the most influential mind of the last (the eighteenth) century; the man who will have produced the greatest effects centuries, or, perhaps, millenniums hence."

The marvellous numerical growth of Wesley's followers must profoundly impress any intelligent person who is familiar with the facts. They are found in every continent and on the islands of the "seven seas." They now form many distinct ecclesiastical bodies, and their aggregate membership amounts to many millions, while their activities, social, educational, missionary, and humanitarian, are absolutely astounding.

Yet the results of their work are not limited to their own organizations. Notwithstanding their tens of thousands of ministers and their millions of members, they have built up the membership of other denominations and for them have been an unfailing fountain of ministerial supply. They have helped to modify or mold other Churches, and they have taken a prominent part in public movements and community reforms of a moral character, so that the influence of Methodism has been felt far beyond the Wesleyan organizations themselves.

The historian John Richard Green, in his "History of the English People," recognized such facts when he said: "The Methodists themselves were the least result of the Methodist revival. Its action upon the Church broke the lethargy of the clergy; and the 'Evangelical' movement, which found representatives like Newton and Cecil within the pale of the Establishment, made the fox-hunting parson and the absentee rector at last impossible. In Walpole's day the English clergy were the idlest and the most lifeless in the world. In our

own day no body of religious ministers surpasses them in piety, in philanthropic energy, or in popular regard.

"In the nation at large appeared a new moral enthusiasm which, rigid and pedantic as it often seemed, was still healthy in its social tone, and whose power was seen in the disappearance of the profligacy which had disgraced the upper classes, and the foulness which had infested literature ever since the Restoration. A new philanthropy reformed our prisons, infused clemency and wisdom into our penal laws, abolished the slave trade, and gave the first impulse to popular education."[1]

[1] J. R. Green: "History of the English People," Vol. IV, Book VIII, pp. 149, 150.

IV

METHODISM AND DOCTRINE

METHODISM has been one of the religious marvels of the ages. That has been the estimate of historians, of philosophers, and of its students in many denominations. What made Methodism such a marvel?

The facts stand out very distinctly. First, its high educational beginning; second, its thorough organization; and third, its exceedingly practical methods.

Methodism had its beginning in Britain's best university. The earliest leaders were university graduates, like the Wesleys, Whitefield, and Coke, all of whom were university men and graduates of Oxford. Others were great and broad scholars like John Fletcher, who was educated at Geneva; Adam Clarke, the son of a classical teacher, became a great oriental scholar, and the author of a most valuable Biblical commentary to the preparations of which he devoted forty years; Joseph Benson, who was educated for the ministry of the Church of England, whom Dr. Adam Clarke pronounced "a sound scholar, a powerful and able preacher, and a profound theologian," who also wrote a "Commentary on the Scriptures"; the wonderful Thomas Walsh, who, born a Roman Catholic, became a Methodist Saint. Of him Wesley said: "Such a master of Biblic knowledge I never saw before, and never expect to see again," and that "he was so thoroughly ac-

quainted with the Bible that if he was questioned concerning any Hebrew word in the Old, or any Greek word in the New Testament, he would tell, after a little pause, not only how often the one or the other occurred in the Bible, but also what it meant in every place." Another said of him: "With the devotion of à Kempis—strongly tinged, too, with his asceticism—and the saintliness of Fletcher, he had the memory of Pascal and the studiousness of Origen." In the pulpit where, as one says: "He often seemed clothed with the ardor and majesty of a seraph," his eloquence was most thrilling, as one who knew him phrased it, "Such a sluice of Divine oratory ran through the whole of his language as is rarely to be met with," and, when he preached to the Irish in their native tongue, "They wept, smote their breasts, invoked the Virgin with sobbing voices, and declared themselves ready to follow him as a Saint over the world."

Coming later was Richard Watson, not a university graduate, but a profound scholar, who was invited to a professorship in an American university. As a preacher, Robert Hall said: "He soars into regions of thought where no genius but his own can penetrate," and the *London Quarterly Review*, in 1854, said: "Watson had not the earnestness and force of Chalmers, but he possessed more thought, philosophy, calm ratiocination, and harmonious fullness. He had not, perhaps, the metaphysical subtlety and rapid combination, the burning affections and elegant diction of Hall; but he possessed as keen a reason, a more lofty imagination, an equal or superior power of painting, and as we think, a much more vivid perception of the spiritual world, and a richer leaven of evangelical sentiment, . . and

exceeded Owen in stretch of thought, sublimity, beautiful imagery, and deep and touching pathos." If Watson had not been physically feeble and suffering from disease nearly all his life, he might have shown robustness like unto that of Chalmers.

His abiding work was his "Theological Institutes." This work has received lofty commendation. Richard Watson died in 1833, but his "Theological Institutes" still live. Doctor John Brown of Edinburgh, in 1852, characterized Watson as "a Prince in theology, and the 'Institutes' as the noblest work in Methodism, and truly valuable." Doctor J. W Alexander said, "Turrentine is in theology *instar omnium* (worth all of them), that is, so far as Blackstone is in law. Making due allowance for difference in age, Watson, the Methodist, is the only systematizer, within my knowledge, who approaches the same eminence; of whom I use Addison's words 'He reasons like Paley, and descants like Hall.'"

Methodism always has had its great scholars as well as its great orators. It has had its university graduates and its great scholars who got their education outside the college, but under the very best instructors, and who, as scholars, were not surpassed even by the university men. In the beginning it was so, and it has never ceased to be so.

At the beginning Methodism did not spring from ignorance and then rise into intelligence, but began among the scholars and amid the loftiest learning, and took the results of high scholarship down to the plain people and enlightened them, and never has Methodism been without learned men, no matter where they got their scholarship.

Such men have aided, taught, and guided the generations, but scholastic education alone does not account for the unique success of Wesleyan Methodism. These cultured men with their varied abilities have been duplicated and repeated through the generations, and they have done a needed and invaluable work for the Church, but something more is needed to explain the success of the Methodist movement.

Something was due to the nature of its organization, which has called forth the admiration of all branches of the Church of Christ, because of its thoroughness and marvellous efficiency. Something was due to its practical methods of work with its splendid system for reaching and retaining the people. Something was due to the direct and earnest style of preaching, something to the character of the services with their hearty singing and their fervent prayers. Something, indeed, very much was due to the class system, giving a direct personal oversight of each and every individual in the organization, and very much was due to the fact and spirit of general activity and coöperation.

All the things mentioned had their place and contributed to the general result, but altogether they do not explain Methodism and its success. Was there something more? If so, what was it?

There was able and eloquent preaching, which, as a producer of striking results, was more important than the organic or strictly scholastic element. The Gospel was to be preached and emphasis was placed on preaching. All its ministers were preachers in an emphatic sense. The first and last question was: Can he preach, and does his preaching show the right results? That was the great test. The candidates had to be speakers

and speakers of the preaching type. They had to have gifts and graces, but the indispensable gift was the gift of speech. They might be scholars, but if they did not have the speaking gift they would not do. That was the method of early Methodism, and that made its preaching the most attractive and the most effective of the time. But even that does not give the full explanation of Methodism's success.

The explanation was not in the grace or vigor of delivery of the discourse, in the quality of the voice, or in the arts of oratory. The great reason for the success was not so much in how they preached, but in what they preached.

They preached, exhorted, and gathered in their converts. Their earnest manner was different from what the people had usually heard from and seen in the other clergy, and "To preach like a Methodist" became an adage. But the important thing is what they preached.

The populace regarded the preaching as different in matter from that which they had heard in the churches, and soon noted it as characteristic of Methodism, and it was not long before it was regarded as having a type of its own, and the people began to speak of "Methodist preaching" in contradistinction to other types.

So this distinctive Methodist preaching was not merely in the style of vocal and physical delivery, but there was something in the matter as well as in the manner of the preaching which the hearers considered distinctive.

All the preaching was Scriptural, that is to say, it was based upon the Sacred Scriptures, and it always appealed to the Bible as the primal and final authority, but these preachers seemed to preach differently from others who likewise professed to preach what was con-

tained in the Holy Scriptures. These preachers seemed to have a different interpretation and application of the Scriptures. In other words their doctrines were different, and the hearers perceived the difference.

The preaching was not only Scriptural in their free use of the wording of the Bible and their appeal to the Sacred Writings as the ultimate authority for what they taught, but it was also doctrinal, following the idea of doctrine, from the Latin, *doctrina*, a teaching, but, in Wesleyan theology, meaning a teaching of the Scriptures, found in the Scriptures, and then Scripturally defined and expressed in forceful, convincing, and authoritative statements and persuasive appeals.

Wesley's early preachers, like Wesley himself, drew out the moral and religious essence of the Bible narratives and its didactive writings, and reproduced their teachings in clear and compact language, which they repeated over and over again almost like axioms in a geometrical demonstration, and with these word forms the people became familiar, fixed them in their memories and used them in their conversation, and soon they became their doctrinal axioms.

In course of time the people began to observe that in the deliverances of the growing numbers of Wesley's preachers, while, in individual cases, there were some peculiarities of manner or expression, there was a marked degree of uniformity in their teaching, and so, in common estimation, there grew to be what was known as "Methodist doctrine."

The Bible was their text-book and the basal authority, and they propounded the question: What does it teach? They looked at humanity and studied its condition, and then, turning to the Bible, asked: What

does it teach as to humanity? And the answers they gradually formulated into their doctrinal expressions.

They did not follow the abstruse and subtile methods of the schoolmen of the middle ages in dealing with abstract speculations. They had no time for unnecessary metaphysics though they had a profound philosophy. What they sought was the practical, with which to do a practical work for the human race, and that molded their methods and determined their doctrines.

Looking on the world they saw sin and sinners, and the question was, How can mankind be lifted out of this sinful condition? Must man sin, or is sin a voluntary act? As sin is a violation of God's law, and God must pronounce judgment against sin and the sinner, then sin is, and must be, disastrous to the sinner. Then the question is, Can the sinner cease sinning, and can he be induced to turn from his sins? Can he be persuaded to repent? Can God pardon the sinner who repents and will he do so? Must there be an atonement? Has an atonement for sin been made? What, if any, are the conditions for salvation from sin and its consequences? Are their twice born men? Can a penitent sinner be morally and spiritually born again? Can a regenerated soul develop and go on from grace to grace in this life?

With such questions as these the Wesleyan Methodists went to the Scriptures for their answers. The answers became their doctrines, and these doctrines they preached to the people.

They preached on the great basal themes of the Scriptures—on God, on Christ, and on Divine Revelation, and their specific teaching seemed to start with the fact of sin and its temporal and eternal consequences;

from this they rose to the need and fact of redemption through an atoning Saviour and the need of repentance, prayer, and faith; and from this they passed on to justification, regeneration, and the holy life, including good works, according to the commandments of God, and these truths they preached over and over again until the plain people easily understood, and soon found they had an evangelical theology which they could state, or restate, in their own simple way.

History reveals that Methodist preaching in the early formative years dealt largely in doctrinal matter. The sermons were based on strongly laid doctrinal foundations, and this was equally true of ordinary and earnest exhortations, and every minister was expected to be skilled in pulpit polemics. They exposed error, warned and alarmed the sinner, comforted and strengthened the faith of the penitent, instructed the convert, and applied the truth to every condition.

What was true of formative Methodism has also been true of formed Methodism that came out of the former plastic period.

Then this Scriptural and doctrinal preaching was not limited to a discourse of a few minutes, say ten, or fifteen, or twenty minutes, or even a half an hour, but usually was extended to a much greater length, and this was possible because in their meetings generally the sermon was not restricted by a too elaborate liturgical service.

Wesley himself frequently preached an hour, an hour and a quarter, or longer, and his early preachers often did likewise, while the people received the word gladly, and often, in the open air, standing throughout the entire service.

This latitude gave the preacher time in which to develop a doctrine, and enabled the hearers to obtain a comprehensive, rather than a fragmentary, view of the subject.

It may be asked: Did Wesleyanism, or Methodism of Wesley's day have any doctrinal standards?

The people "commonly called Methodists," including the Reverend John Wesley, began on the basis of the general Christian belief as held by Protestantism, and on this foundation built up their own distinctive beliefs.

Methodism has always stood for doctrines, has always taught doctrines, and has always, in some form, demanded doctrinal beliefs, as, later, will more fully appear.

Any intelligent and fair-minded student of Methodism must see that formative Methodism, and formed Methodism as well, made much of doctrines.

Still some may raise a question as to how much stress Methodism placed on belief in religious doctrines.

Was Wesleyanism latitudinarian as to doctrinal beliefs, and did it have little or no care as to what was preached, taught, said, or believed?

What was believed and preached had a marked similarity, and for this there must have been some common cause, so we ask: Did Methodism have any doctrinal standards that produced the remarkable uniformity in the preaching?

The answer to that is that the presumption must be that it had a standard, or standards, of some kind.

The logical presumption is that every denomination has its common beliefs, for beliefs in common brought the people together, and held them together.

It is to be assumed also that every denomination has,

in some form, standard expressions of these central and common beliefs, which expressions are regarded as the model phrasings of the doctrines, which may be more or less formal, and to which a comparative appeal can be taken, in case of subsequent utterances on the subject, by individuals, or collective bodies, large or small, and the formally phrased doctrinal utterances, or formulations, would be its standards of doctrine.

Wesleyanism, or Methodism, could not be an exception to this principle, for it was manifestly the case in Methodism that its people were drawn together and held together by common and fundamental religious beliefs.

In the very nature of things, Methodism must have had its doctrines and its standard of doctrines.

From the beginning it preached doctrines, and its ministers were essentially doctrinal preachers. It had common, and commonly accepted religious doctrines. It preached, prayed, and sung its doctrines, and, even during its early years, created a great doctrinal literature.

It will be found that Methodism maintained and insisted upon what it called "sound doctrine." While it was liberal as to non-essentials, it strongly and rigidly insisted on what it regarded as the fundamentals of the Christian religion. It stood for doctrines, taught doctrines, and required doctrinal beliefs, and of these there must have been authoritative statements which were standards of doctrine.

V

JOHN WESLEY AND DOCTRINE

THE Reverend John Wesley was the founder of organized Methodism and its active leader for over a half century. He was and is the key to Methodism. He opens the door to its history, its government, and its doctrinal system. He was its start in history, its germ and genius in government, and the molder of its doctrines.

Starting as a devoted Churchman, at the beginning of his career he was rated as a High Churchman, but very early in his ministry he got rid of his high-churchism.

Next to the influence of the Scriptures he was largely dominated by the practical, and was inclined to the thing or method that brought practical results. He also rested, to a great extent, on personal and internal religious experience, and taught with great emphasis the necessity of a personal spiritual experience, and his doctrinal views and teachings were strongly influenced by Scriptural and practical principles.

From some points of view he might be regarded as a mystic, but he was too practical to be a mere mystic, and all the apparent mysticism steadily worked for practical ends.

We repeat, therefore, that the Reverend John Wesley was, and still is, the key to Methodism. He is the key to its history, its polity, and its doctrinal system, and

if one wants to understand Methodism the safest way is to go back to, start with, and follow Wesley, for John Wesley was, and still is, the model Methodist, as man and minister, and as master teacher of its systematic theology.

John Wesley's preaching and his writings were largely of a doctrinal character, and, if we had nothing but his sermons, we would have a great and comprehensive body of divinity.

As Professor John A. Faulkner, of Drew Theological Seminary, has said of the Reverend John Wesley: "He was the great doctrinal preacher of the eighteenth century."

With such a leader, even at the beginning, it was probable, therefore, that Methodism would have both doctrines and doctrinal standards. It was more than probable; it was practically certain.

The great mass of Wesley's sermons were decidedly doctrinal, so that those who heard him frequently were more or less thoroughly indoctrinated.

But he was not merely a preacher but also an author and publisher, and he used the press to such an extent, that, so to speak, he covered the British Islands with good literature, indeed, the best of that time, and made the inhabitants a reading people, and his own followers a religious reading people to a degree that his followers in the present generation have not surpassed, and, it is to be feared, in ecclesiastical and doctrinal matters, have not equalled.

Among other things this literature embraced history, philosophy, natural science, religion, and theology. Himself a broad man he wanted the people to have breadth of knowledge. By print, as well as by voice

and authority he spread and maintained the truth, and a large proportion of that which he published was of a doctrinal nature.

Not only did he preach and print doctrines, but he freely and forcefully entered into public controversies, and Wesley's opponents gave currency to his views in what they printed.

As the Reverend Anson West, D. D., of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, said of John Wesley: "He preached doctrines. Mr. Wesley did more in refuting theological errors and in formulating and expounding the doctrines of the Bible than any one man of the centuries.

"He did not originate any new religious truth—no man has since the canon of Scripture was completed—but he revived, systematized, expounded, and preached evangelical truth in the complete measure and entireness thereof.

"Wesley always gave prominence to personal experience, spiritual life, and discipline, but he had constantly before him doctrine, doctrine first, and the basis of the others. His great care was doctrine.

"In the measure in which he organized, he organized a system of doctrines. He organized on doctrines."[1]

Notwithstanding such facts and such testimony, some have intimated, and even positively asserted, that the Reverend John Wesley, the founder of Methodism, or Wesleyanism, made little or no moment of doctrinal matters.

But, if he made no moment of doctrines, of what did he make much moment? How could he get along in

[1] Rev. Anson West, D. D., address before the Centennial Methodist Conference, 1884.

his evangelical movement and accomplish the work he did without doctrines and very pronounced beliefs ?

The Methodist movement itself was necessarily based on doctrines—doctrines as to God, as to Christ, as to the Holy Ghost, as to God's revelation, sin, salvation, and the future life, and without doctrines, stated, accepted, and believed, Wesley could not have preached his evangel, and the people could not have been impressed and moved, and, further, to do this work these doctrines must have stood together in a consistent system.

As a matter of historic fact Wesley taught Scriptural doctrines, and demanded corresponding beliefs from his hearers, and his followers. With his hearers of all classes he reasoned; with his followers, after reasoning, he commanded.

For any one to assert that John Wesley was indifferent as to doctrines and that he put little or no stress on doctrinal matters, is to assert that which is absolutely untrue, and no well-informed and candid student of the history would venture such a suggestion.

From the high-church views of his youth he soon departed, and became an evangelical low-churchman, or a low-church evangelical, but he never ceased to hold the fundamental faith of orthodox Christianity, and to this he added as clearer views came to him. He always had his essential creed, though he conceded there were some non-essentials on which brother Christians might differ and not disagree.

It is true that Mr. Wesley ordinarily was generous in his judgment of those with whom he did not agree doctrinally, but it is not correct to suppose that he treated indifferently the matter of sound theological views either on the part of himself or others.

He always maintained the authority of the Bible. Thus in one of his sermons Wesley says:

"But the Christian rule of right and wrong is the word of God, the writings of the Old and New Testament; all that the Prophets and 'holy men of old' wrote 'as they were moved by the Holy Ghost'; all that Scripture which was given by inspiration of God, and which is indeed profitable for doctrine, or teaching the whole will of God; for reproof of what is contrary thereto; for correction of error; and for instruction, or training us up, in righteousness (2 Tim. iii. 16)."

Again, he thus records his opinion of the Scriptures, when he says:

"Concerning the Scriptures in general, it may be observed, the word of the living God, which directed the first Patriarchs also, was, in the time of Moses, committed to writing. To this were added, in several succeeding generations, the inspired writings of the other Prophets. Afterwards, what the Son of God preached, and the Holy Ghost spake by the Apostles, the Apostles and Evangelists wrote. This is what we now style the Holy Scripture: This is that 'word of God which remaineth forever'; of which, though 'heaven and earth pass away, one jot or tittle shall not pass away.' The Scripture, therefore, of the Old and New Testament is a most solid and precious system of divine truth. Every part thereof is worthy of God, and all together are one entire body, wherein is no defect, no excess. It is the fountain of heavenly wisdom, which they who are able to taste, prefer to all writings of men, however wise, or learned, or holy." [1]

[1] Wesley's Preface to his "Explanatory Notes upon the New Testament."

Writing to Joseph Benson, on the seventeenth of September, 1788, Mr. Wesley says: "You well observe that it is 'dangerous, on such subjects, to depart from Scripture, either as to language or sentiment;' and I believe that 'most of the controversies which have disturbed the Church have arisen from people's wanting to be wise above what is written, not contented with what God has plainly revealed there.' What have you or I to do with that 'difficulty'? I dare not, will not reason about it for a moment. I believe just what is revealed, and no more; but I do not pretend to account for it, or to solve the difficulties that may attend it. Let angels do this if they can; but I think they cannot." [1]

Thus he rested firmly and finally on the Sacred Scriptures, and tested himself and others by them. What they said was the last word.

Wesley always regarded the Holy Scriptures as the final authority, and from them drew his doctrines.

In a letter written to the Reverend Dr. Dodd, in 1756, when Wesley was about fifty-three, he said:

"I build on no authority, ancient or modern, but the Scripture. If this supports any doctrine, it will stand; if not, the sooner it falls, the better. Neither the doctrine in question, nor any other, is anything to me, unless it be the doctrine of Christ and His Apostles."

Now suppose one would take out Wesley's words: "The doctrine in question, nor any other, is anything to me," and quote them as Wesley's opinion against doctrines, we would have a sample of methods that utterly misrepresent him. Truly they would be Wes-

[1] Wesley's "Works," Amer. Ed., New York, 1836; Vol. VII, pp. 81, 82.

ley's own words, but they would not express Wesley's sentiment or meaning, because they are wrested from their qualifying connection. That is what some have done in a number of instances.

Mr. Wesley, indeed, may be found to say: "I am sick of opinions; I am weary to hear them; my soul loathes this frothy food. Give me substantial religion. Give me an humble, gentle lover of God and man. Whosoever thus doeth the will of my Father in heaven, the same is brother and sister and mother."

There is nothing in this against sound theological views. On the very face of the quotation is the evidence that he is speaking of a dependence upon mere opinions as divorced from "substantial religion," and here Wesley stands for real practical religion, but not against doctrinal knowledge or belief. He is weary of those who parade theology in mere controversy, but do not present religion in its vitality. Given real religion, there is no objection to theological correctness.

It is true that sometimes Wesley made remarks that a hasty mind might conclude looked like a slighting treatment of theological views, but a careful consideration of the context, and the circumstances, will show that the thing slightingly treated was dependence upon theological opinions to the disregard of the genuine spiritual life.

With him mere correctness of opinion was not sufficient, as the mere observance of external formalities was not enough. These, in themselves, according to his judgment, were right as far as they went, but there were also required the spiritual regeneration of the heart, and the holy life within as well as without; and in nothing he said of this character was

there any disparagement of theological knowledge or the importance of soundness in doctrine. The objection of Wesley was not to sound doctrinal views, or to external religious observances, but to dependence upon them while the spiritual was discarded or neglected.

There is an instance of John Wesley's reference to dependence upon mere orthodoxy in his "The Plain Account of the People Called Methodists," which was printed in 1748.

In this he says: "About ten years ago, my brother and I were desired to preach in many parts of London. We had no view therein, but, so far as we were able (and we knew God could work by whomsoever it pleased him), to convince those who would hear what true Christianity was, and to persuade them to embrace it.

"The points we chiefly insisted upon were four: First, that orthodoxy, or right opinions, is, at best, but a very slender part of religion, if it can be allowed to be any part of it at all; that neither does religion consist in negatives, in bare harmlessness of any kind, nor merely in externals, in doing good, or using the means of grace, in works of piety (so called) or of charity; that it is nothing short of, or different from, 'the mind that was in Christ'; the image of God stamped upon the heart; inward righteousness, attended with the peace of God, 'and joy in the Holy Ghost.' Secondly, that the only way under heaven to this religion is, to 'repent and believe the gospel;' or (as the Apostle words it), 'repentance toward God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.' Thirdly, that by this faith, 'he that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly is justified freely by his grace, through the

redemption which is in Jesus Christ.' And lastly, that 'being justified by faith,' we taste of the heaven to which we are going; we are holy and happy; we tread down sin and fear, and 'sit in heavenly places with Christ Jesus.' "

In this Mr. Wesley is not saying anything against "orthodoxy, or right opinions," but is stating what he regards as "true Christianity." This is not in the merely intellectual, shown in "right opinions," or in mere externals, but is in "inward righteousness," which comes through "repentance toward God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ." If, however, one has such "inward righteousness," he may, and should, have the "right opinions" and the right religious "externals."

Wesley's charity and liberality of view were very marked, and consequently some who have superficially, or unfairly, studied him, have drawn hasty inferences, and to some extent have thrown this great man into a false light, by putting a greater emphasis on his liberality than would have been justified by a fair and full survey of all the facts.

He said liberal things, and recognized goodness in those with whom he doctrinally differed but that did not mean theological indifference. He said appreciative words, for example, of a dead Unitarian minister, but he never indorsed Unitarianism, and he would not have permitted a live Unitarian minister to become a member of his ministerial Conference, or to preach to his people. Mr. Wesley would recognize goodness in the individual, but, at the same time, would oppose his intellectual errors.

It is a great mistake to suppose that John Wesley was so latitudinarian that he did not care what others

believed, or that he did not demand any belief from his preachers or people.

Wesley was liberal, or charitable, but he was not a latitudinarian in theology, but, on the contrary, he had most positive beliefs, and expected his followers, and particularly his preachers, to be sound in Christian doctrine.

If one wishes to say Wesley was an evangelical liberal, which is correct, nevertheless that must be qualified by the fact that he always had firm faith in the fundamental doctrines of Christianity as they had come down from the early Church of Christ. More than that he demanded faith in these fundamentals, and aggressively opposed erroneous beliefs.

He has been quoted as saying, "We think and let think," and it is true that he used these words. But he did not use them as some pretend or hastily infer. Some wrest the words from their connection, distort the meaning, and falsify what Wesley said, because they fail to give the connection. What Mr. Wesley did say was: "As to all opinions which do not strike at the root of Christianity, we think and let think." In other words he made a distinction between major and minor matters, and put the emphasis on the greater and essential opinions.

Wesley is quoted as saying: "If thine heart be as my heart, give me thy hand."

Yes, Mr. Wesley did say, "If thine heart be as my heart, give me thy hand," but he did not mean what some have imagined. It was not an indorsement of all sorts of belief and no belief.

Wesley never meant, or tolerated, indifference to religious opinions, or Churches, or latitudinarianism in

theology. He would not have men of all beliefs come into his ministry and Conference, and he would not allow people to come into and remain in his societies, regardless of the doctrinal views they held and uttered.

There is no need for misunderstanding Wesley in this matter. He held his own opinions just the same, and he had no thought of indorsing all forms of contrary beliefs, or even of regarding them as matters of indifference. What did he mean by thy heart being as mine, and by giving thy hand?

The matter is cleared up by what Wesley himself has said. He preached a whole sermon on the text: "Is thine heart right, as my heart is with thy heart?
If it be, give me thine hand" (2 Kings x. 15).

On this, among other things, he says: "But although a difference in opinions or modes of worship may prevent an entire external union; yet need it prevent our union in affection? Though we cannot think alike, may we not love alike? May we not be of one heart, though we are not of one opinion? Without all doubt we may." But this was not saying that it made no difference what one believed, or that he had no positive beliefs of his own. It was the outcropping of the fraternal spirit between truly Christian denominations, though they had "a difference in opinions or modes of worship."

In defining the question Wesley shows that by his remark he means: "Is thy heart right with God? Dost thou believe his being, and his perfections? .
Hast thou a divine evidence, a supernatural conviction of the things of God? . . . Dost thou believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, 'God over all, blessed forever'? Is he revealed in thy soul? Dost thou know Jesus Christ

and him crucified? . . Having absolutely disclaimed all thy own works, thy own righteousness, hast thou 'submitted thyself unto the righteousness of God,' which is by faith in Christ Jesus? . . . Is thy faith filled with the energy of love? . . . Hath the love of God cast the love of the world out of thy soul? . . . Art thou employed in doing 'not thy own will, but the will of him that sent thee'? . . . Does the love of God constrain thee to serve him with fear,—to 'rejoice unto him with reverence'? . . . Is thy heart right toward thy neighbor? Dost thou love, as thyself, all mankind without exception? . . . Do you show your love by your works?"

That is what Wesley meant by the question, "Is thine heart right?" It was not the head so much as the heart, but it contained a lot of orthodox faith in God, in Jesus Christ, and in salvation by faith, and in a pervading Christian experience. That was not indifference as to Christian doctrine.

Again in this connection Wesley sounds a note of warning as to a misinterpretation of the phrase "a catholic spirit," and remarks that: "There is scarce any expression which has been more grossly misunderstood, and more dangerously misapplied than this."

"From hence we may learn, first, That a catholic spirit is not *speculative* latitudinarianism. It is not an indifference to opinions: this is the spawn of hell, not the offspring of heaven. This unsettledness of thought, this being 'driven to and fro, and tossed about with every wind of doctrine,' is a great curse, not a blessing; an irreconcilable enemy, not a friend to true catholicism. A man of a truly catholic spirit has not now his religion to seek. He is fixed as the Sun in his

judgment concerning the main branches of Christian doctrine. . . . He does not halt between two opinions, nor vainly endeavor to blend them into one. Observe this, you who know not what spirit ye are of; who call yourselves men of a catholic spirit, only because you are of a muddy understanding; because your mind is all in a mist; because you have no settled, consistent principles, but are for jumbling all opinions together. Be convinced that you have quite missed your way; you know not where you are. You think you are got into the very spirit of Christ; when in truth, you are nearer the spirit of antichrist. Go, first, and learn the first elements of the gospel of Christ, and then shall you learn to be of a truly catholic spirit.

"From what has been said, we may learn, secondly, that a catholic spirit is not any kind of *practical* latitudinarianism. It is not indifference as to public worship, or as to the outward manner of performing it. This, likewise, would not be a blessing but a curse. . . .

"Hence we may, thirdly, learn that a catholic spirit is not indifference to all congregations. This is another sort of latitudinarianism, no less absurd and unscriptural than the former. . . . But while he is steadily fixed in his religious principles, in what he believes to be the truth as it is in Jesus; while he firmly adheres to the worship of God which he judges to be most acceptable in his sight; and while he is united, by the tenderest and closest ties, to one particular congregation,—his heart is enlarged toward all mankind. This is catholic, or universal love."

That is how Mr. Wesley defined "If thine heart be as my heart." It was not a wishy washy sentimental-

ism that had no convictions, or that held that religious opinions were of little or no moment, but which implied positive convictions and a stalwart adherence to settled opinions, but coupled with a spirit of love for others, and especially for those who had such a religious experience and belief as he had described.

Wesley had his own theological views, fought for them, and maintained them, while he demanded from others that they believe in God, and have a heart right with God; that they believe in Christ "God over all, blessed forever"; that they believe in Jesus as the crucified Saviour, and be justified by faith in him; and beyond this he expected faith in all the fundamentals of the Christian religion.

He meant that others should have heads as well as hearts, and that they would think aright as well as feel right, and he had an utter contempt for that spineless thing which some call "a catholic spirit." If a surgical operation could have put into it a living theological back bone, he might have tolerated it, but not as he described it. Unfortunately the spineless kind still exists.

The citation of a few further facts will demonstrate that the Reverend John Wesley always took and maintained a strong doctrinal attitude.

Thus Mr. Wesley and his followers, on the 20th of July, 1740, marched out of the Fetter Lane Society, in London, and permanently withdrew from that body because of the doctrines therein taught, and against which he had strongly protested.

This was not then a Moravian Society, as some have supposed, though there were Moravians in it, but later it did become Moravian.

Mr. Wesley broke with his early and dearly beloved friend, the Reverend George Whitefield, because Whitefield taught Calvinistic doctrines to which Wesley was opposed.

Wesley stood for Arminianism, and against Calvinism, with its predestination and its unconditional election, and no warrior ever fought for a cause with greater determination than John Wesley did for the doctrines of free will, free grace, and free salvation.

The Reverend John Fletcher's celebrated "Checks to Antinomianism" were really the thought of Wesley voiced by Fletcher.

On the title page of the first of these remarkable tracts we find the title: "First Check to Antinomianism;[1] or A Vindication of the Rev. Mr. Wesley's Minutes of a Public Conference, held in London, August 7, 1770. . . By a Lover of Quietness and Liberty of Conscience."

The Reverend John Wesley had many doctrinal discussions, and often stood up against most bitter attacks, thus showing that he had settled views, strong convictions, and that, instead of being indifferent on the subject of religious doctrines, he was ever ready to cross swords in defense of the doctrines which he deemed of vital importance. Such a man could not have been indifferent as to what people, and, especially, his own people, believed.

[1] An Antinomian has been defined as, One who maintains that, under the Gospel dispensation, the moral law is of no use or obligation, but that faith alone is necessary to salvation. The title comes from Antinomy, opposition of one law or rule to another. The sect originated about the year 1535.

Wesley was liberal—an evangelical liberal—but he was not the kind of a liberal that some have represented him to have been.

In 1765, before his Conference, he said: "I have no more right to object to a man for holding a different opinion from mine than I have to differ with a man because he wears a wig and I wear my own hair; but if he takes his wig off and shakes the powder in my eyes, I shall consider it my duty to get quit of him as soon as possible."[1]

That contains the explanation of Wesley's liberality and related conduct. He tolerated the man who had a different opinion and *held* it, but if the individual did not *hold* his differing opinions in silence, but, on the contrary, shook them before his face, and threw their dust into his eyes, then, as he said, he considered it his "duty to get quit of him as soon as possible."

Wesley's liberality was not great enough to let him tolerate the views even of the Friends, a very worthy people in many ways.

To Archbishop Secker he wrote: "Between me and the Quakers there is a great gulf fixed. The sacraments of baptism and the Lord's Supper keep us at a wide distance from each other; insomuch that according to the view of things I have now, I should as soon commence deist as Quaker."

When a man as broad as Wesley could say that of such a people as the Friends, he certainly did not treat doctrines as matters of little or no moment.

Wesley wrote an octavo volume, of 522 pages, on "The Doctrine of Original Sin; according to Scripture, Reason, and Experience," in answer to Doctor John

[1] Wesley's Journal, May 14, 1765.

Taylor, the noted Socinian[1] minister, who had written his "Doctrine of Original Sin," a subject at that time apparently more interesting than it seems to be to some in the present time. Perhaps some to-day have little interest because there is nothing very original about their own sins. But, with the view Wesley took of the subject, to him it was a matter of primary importance. It may be said that he viewed it in a peculiar way, but what he wrote was, and is, well worth reading, even after the lapse of about one hundred and sixty years.[2]

In a letter to Doctor Taylor, written on the third of July, 1759, the Reverend John Wesley said:

"But, certainly, it is a controversy of the highest importance; nay of all the things that concern our eternal peace. It is Christianity, or heathenism. For take away the Scriptural doctrine of redemption, or justification, and that of the new birth; or, which amounts to the same, explain them as you do, suitably to your doctrine of original sin; and what is Christianity better than heathenism? Wherein, except in rectifying some of our notions, has the religion of St. Paul any preeminence over that of Socrates or Epictetus?"[3]

Plainly it is not fair to accuse one who expresses himself like that of indifference as to what people believe.

In 1764,[4] Mr. Wesley wrote "A Short History of

[1] Socinian is thus defined: "Of, or pertaining or adhering to Socinus, or Socinianism. Socinianism: The doctrines of Faustus Socinus, an Italian theologian of the sixteenth century, who denied the Trinity, Christ's deity, the Devil's personality, man's native and total depravity, the vicarious atonement, and the eternity of future punishment."

[2] Wesley's "Works," Amer. Ed., Vol. V, p. 492.

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 667.

[4] The second edition has date of 1765.

Methodism," a small 12mo pamphlet of eleven pages, and, brief though it was, it showed that his preachers and people, as well as himself, had definite doctrinal convictions, though they cultivated the spirit of fraternity toward those with whom they differed.

In the conclusion the author says:

"All who preach among them (the Methodists) declare, 'We are all by nature children of wrath. But by grace we are saved through faith; saved both from the guilt and from the power of sin.' They endeavor to live according to what they preach, to be plain *Bible Christians.* And they meet together, at convenient times, to encourage one another therein. They tenderly love many that are Calvinists, though they do not love their opinions. Yea they love the Antinomians themselves; but it is with a love of compassion only. For they hate their doctrines with a perfect hatred; they abhor them as they do hell fire; being convinced nothing can so effectually destroy all faith, all holiness, and all good works."[1]

That statement does not look like indifference to doctrinal opinions.

Take some of Wesley's views as to Romanism and you have a specimen of mixed liberalism and strenuous antagonism. On January 21, 1780, John Wesley wrote "A Letter to the Printer of the *Public Advertiser*, occasioned by the late Act passed in favor of Popery." In this letter Mr. Wesley says:

"With persecution I have nothing to do. I persecute no man for his religious principles. Let there be as 'boundless a freedom in religion' as any man

[1] Wesley's "Works," Amer. Ed., Vol. V, p. 248. Tyerman: "Life of Wesley," Vol. II, p. 533.

can conceive. But this does not touch the point; I will set religion, true or false, utterly out of the question. . . .

"Suppose every word of Pope Pius's creed to be true; suppose the Council of Trent to have been infallible; yet, I insist upon it that no government, not Roman Catholic, ought to tolerate men of the Roman Catholic persuasion.

"I prove this by a plain argument; let him answer it that can. That no Roman Catholic does or can give security for his allegiance or peaceable behaviour, I prove thus. It is a Roman Catholic maxim, established, not by private men, but by a public council, that 'no faith is to be kept with heretics.' This has been openly avowed by the Council of Constance; but it never was openly disclaimed. Whether private persons avow or disavow it, it is a fixed maxim of the Church of Rome. But as long as it is so, it is plain that the members of that Church can give no reasonable security, to any government, of their allegiance or peaceable behaviour. Therefore, they ought not to be tolerated by any government, Protestant, Mohammedan or pagan. .

"Again, those who acknowledge the *spiritual power* of the pope can give no security of their allegiance to any government; but all Roman Catholics acknowledge this; therefore, they can give no security for their allegiance. .

"The power of granting *pardons* for all sins, past, present, and to come, is, and has been for many centuries, one branch of his *spiritual power*.

"But those who acknowledge him to have this spiritual power can give no security for their allegiance;

since they believe the pope can pardon rebellions, high treasons, and all other sins whatsoever.

"Setting then religion aside, it is plain that, upon principles of reason, no government ought to tolerate men, who cannot give any security to that government for their allegiance and peaceable behaviour. But this no Romanist can do, not only while he holds that 'no faith is to be kept with heretics,' but so long as he acknowledges either priestly absolution or the *spiritual power* of the pope."[1]

In that Mr. Wesley was a mixture of the patriot, the logician, and the theologian, but there was nowhere the man of flabby convictions.

Wesley's judgments as to doctrinal beliefs were so pronounced that persons were dropped from connection with him because their expressed beliefs were not in harmony with those accepted by Wesley and his organization.

In 1791, close to the end of Wesley's long life, while writing to Doctor Adam Clarke, he said:

"Let not the excluded preachers by any means creep in again. In any wise, write and send me your thoughts on *animal magnetism.* I set my face against that device of Satan. Two of our preachers here are in danger of that satanical delusion; but if they persist to defend it, I must drop them. I know its principles full well."

So he seems to have had opinions and also opposition to various opinions.

In the last year of his ministry, again writing to Doctor Adam Clarke, and referring to "Christian Perfection," Wesley said:

[1] Tyerman: "Life of Wesley," Vol. III, pp. 318, 319.

"If we can prove that any of our local preachers or leaders speak against it let him be a local preacher or leader no longer. I doubt whether he should continue in the Society; for he that could speak thus in our congregation cannot be an honest man."

That indicates how far Wesley would go to maintain one of the doctrines within his membership, but one should not hastily draw the inference that Wesley meant every subordinate theory about Christian Perfection that one might hear to-day or might have been heard at that time. Christian Perfection is one thing, and for that essential thing Wesley stood, but one of a dozen theories sometimes advanced might be a very different thing. Even in Wesley's time there were differences within the body as to some details concerning this Perfection, but all the loyal ones maintained Christian Perfection to be sought and to be found.

Wesley did not approve of those who did not believe in the doctrine of "Original Sin," as it was styled. Thus in the British Minutes for 1784, we find this question and answer:

"*Q.* 20. Some who once preached with us deny Original Sin. What is to be done in this case?

"*A.* No Preacher who denies Original Sin can preach among us; and we advise our brethren not to hear him."

That meant the preacher would be silenced or expelled if he was in the membership, and, if he did not belong, he was to be prohibited from preaching in the Society gatherings, and the people were to be warned against hearing him. Wesley, however, made some marked modifications in certain ancient definitions of "Original Sin."

Toward the close of 1739, at the very beginning of his organized work, John Wesley published his tract on "The Character of a Methodist." [1]

It is in this that Wesley uses the expression, "We think and let think," which is quoted sometimes without its connection being given.

The tract clearly shows that Wesley and his followers even in that early period had a fixed faith in the fundamental doctrines, and that his followers were expected to have the same. A few brief citations will be sufficient to prove this.

In this publication he says:

"We believe, indeed, that 'all Scripture is given by the inspiration of God'; and herein we are distinguished from Jews, Turks, and Infidels."

"We believe the written word of God to be the only and sufficient rule both of Christian faith and practice; and herein we are fundamentally distinguished from those of the Roman Church.

"We believe Christ to be the eternal Supreme God; and herein we are distinguished from the Socinians and Arians." [2]

Mr. Wesley closes his declaration as to the beliefs of Methodists, on this point, by saying:

"But as to all opinions which do not strike at the root of Christianity, we think and let think. So that, whatsoever they are, whether right or wrong, they are no distinguishing marks of a Methodist." [3]

[1] Wesley's "Works," Amer. Ed., Vol. V, pp. 240, 241.

[2] Arian is defined as: "Of or pertaining to Arius, a presbyter of the Church of Alexandria, in the fourth century, who held that Christ is inferior to God the Father."

[3] Wesley's "Works," Amer. Ed., Vol. V, p. 241.

That is to say, as to minor, or non-essential matters, there was latitude, but there was insistence as to the fundamentals which lay "at the root of Christianity," such as God, that the Scriptures were divinely inspired, and that Christ was "the eternal supreme God."

So the "distinguishing marks of a Methodist," doctrinally speaking, were not the non-essentials, but those that connected with "the root of Christianity."

"We think and let think" did not mean that he did not care what people thought on vital matters, but on things which were non-essential or indifferent in themselves, while on other matters he demanded that all should think correctly.

These are citations from Wesley's writings in 1739, when his first Society was organized, in 1740, in 1759, in 1764, in 1765, in 1780, and on to 1791, the year in which Mr. Wesley died, and they show a remarkable consistency through all the fifty-two years when he was the recognized head of the Wesleyan movement in which position he continued until his decease.

All this time he was a doctrinal preacher, writer, and controversialist, insisting upon religious doctrines, and, after these proofs from Wesley's own words, it is time to call a halt on assertions to the effect that the Reverend John Wesley disregarded doctrines, and that with him it made little or no difference what men believed, for the fact is that Wesley was not indifferent as to what people, and, especially, his own people believed, but, on the contrary, insisted upon correct beliefs and vigorously opposed erroneous and false teachings as to religion.

VI

"ONLY ONE CONDITION"

SOME one may call attention to Mr. Wesley's one condition for admission into his Societies as proof that he made no point as to doctrinal beliefs.

It is true that in his General Rules it is said: "There is only one condition previously required of those who desire admission into these Societies—'a desire to flee from the wrath to come, and to be saved from their sins,'" and, hence, we are told, that no adherence to doctrines was required of those who entered Wesley's Societies, or who remained in them. It will appear, however, that this is not a well founded inference.

In considering this statement every one should remember the very simple nature of Wesley's early Societies.

At the beginning they were rather crude, and might be regarded mainly as social religious gatherings of a very simple character.

These General Rules were prepared and published by John Wesley, in the year 1743, which was close to the time of the organization of his first Society, when Wesley had no purpose beyond that form of a simple religious Society, and they were written before he had even organized a Conference of preachers, as well as before he could have had any thought of organizing a regular Church, and he was not making the rules for a regular and complete Church.

With these facts in view, it is plain that the conditions existing at that early day must be considered when we study the "only one condition previously required of those who desire admission into these Societies."

At that time it was not intended to be such a condition as might have been demanded for entrance into a regularly established Church, while, since that time, Methodism has developed far beyond the germ form in the earliest societies, and, later, additional requirements have been introduced into the developing organism, which show that the "one condition" was not a finality, but a beginning.

The phrasing of the rule itself is rather remarkable. Thus it says: "There is only one condition previously required of those who desire admission into these Societies."

The words "previously required" should be noted and their force should be studied. Whatever this part of the rule meant, it was only "previously required," as though it implied other requirements to follow, and was not the "only" condition that would be required. The fact is that Mr. Wesley took all those who were admitted into the Society on probation, and on a probation which implied many tests which had to be met, so that, if it be true, that he required only one condition for entrance into his early Society, his General Rules required the meeting of many conditions for remaining therein.

Even if Mr. Wesley demanded only one condition for admission into his early Society, the rest of the "Rules," of which that was a part, shows that he required compliance with quite a number of conditions if the party

was to be permitted to continue his membership therein. In that sense the party was admitted on probation.

The candidates started on the "one condition," namely, the possession of the specified desire, but then there was something more to do.

Thus the General Rules say: "They shall continue to evidence their desire," so that there was to be a continual condition, many conditions, and a constant response to ever present tests.

These continuing evidences were, and are:

"First: By doing no harm, by avoiding evil of every kind; especially that which is most generally practised," etc.

"Secondly, By doing good, by being, in every kind, merciful after their power; as they have opportunity, doing good of every possible sort, and as far as is possible, to all men," etc.

"Thirdly, By attending upon all the ordinances of God; such are

"The Public Worship of God.

The Ministry of the Word, either read or expounded.

The Supper of the Lord.

Family and private Prayer.

Searching the Scriptures.

Fasting or Abstinence."[1]

It has been asserted that no doctrinal beliefs were required, but all that which has been stated implies the fundamental Christian beliefs, for example, belief in the existence of God, in the Scriptures as a divine revelation, and, so, in the authority of the Bible, and also belief in the atonement for sin through the passion and sacrificial death of Jesus, the Lord. There

[1] Wesley's "Works," Amer. Ed., New York, Vol. V, pp. 190–192.

were also various faiths involved in the practical Christian duties recited, such as, "searching the Scriptures, prayer, partaking of the Lord's Supper, public worship, and attendance upon the reading and preaching of the word. All these had to be met, and that continuously. Otherwise, referring to the one who fails, the Rules say: "He hath no more place among us." He was excluded.

The fact is that all who were received into the Society were taken in on a probation, and, further, none of those who were received had any power in the government of Wesley's United Society, either general or local.

Some seem to imagine that the "only one condition" was actually or practically no condition at all, but a little examination will show that the "one condition" is far from being an equivalent for nothing, or next to nothing, as some have tried to reason.

An analysis will show that such a notion is very far from being the fact, for even if the "only one condition" is a seeming unit, it will be found that is made up of, and may be resolved into various and separate atoms, for it involves a considerable number of points of belief and many fundamental doctrines.

Let us, then, consider some things that are involved in "a desire to flee from the wrath to come, and to be saved from their sins."

The condition might be analyzed from any one of several starting points, but it does not matter much where one begins.

Plainly the condition implies belief and a number of beliefs of a doctrinal nature.

In the first place it implies a belief in the fact that

there is such a thing as sin, and the consciousness that the sin is against God, which carries with it belief in the existence of God, and of a God who has laws that man may violate, but, further, that, connected with these laws, God has penalties which will be inflicted upon those who do violate his laws. So the "condition" mentions "sins," and "the wrath to come."

Or, changing the form slightly, the first faith implied is belief in the existence of sin. The second, that sin is against God. The third, that God exists, or, in other words, it implies belief in the existence of God. The fourth is that the superior or Supreme Being, God, feels and manifests wrath against sin, sinning, and the sinner. The fifth is that punishment follows sin. The sixth, that there is a divine wrath to come, involving future judgment and an inflicted penalty. The seventh, that the applicant for membership knows and fully realizes that he is a sinner and under divine condemnation. The eighth, that he is penitent, and, having repented, he wants "to flee from the wrath to come." The ninth is that he desires not only "to flee from the wrath," but also desires to be "saved from" his sins and the consequences thereof. The tenth is that the individual believes that men may "flee from the wrath to come" and be "saved from their sins," which means that there is salvation offered and that there is a Saviour who can and will save. The eleventh belief is that men should have "a desire to flee from the wrath to come, and to be saved from their sins."

So to meet the "one condition" for admission, the candidate must believe in God, in sin, in God's wrath against sin, and in salvation through the Christian's Saviour, Jesus Christ, and, to have these beliefs, he must

have faith in the body of Christian doctrine and in the Bible from which these beliefs come.

All these things involve repentance, and prayer, and trust in Jesus Christ, the Saviour, and his atonement for sin, and all that implies faith in the divine revelation of these things, and that meant, as they very well knew, belief in the Scriptures, which tell these things.

So these beliefs involved in the "one condition" plainly imply many others growing out of the acceptance of the Scriptures, such as a belief, not in the pagan's deity, but in the God of the Bible, and also in "saving faith" in the Christ-Saviour.

Hence when John Wesley "previously required" "only one condition" for admission into his early society, it is not true that he required nothing, or that he required no doctrinal belief, or that he required only one little thing, but that he required many things, for back of that "only one condition" was the implication and fact of a general Christian faith, and that was not "nothing," or only a little thing, but something that was broadly comprehensive.

Wesley did not mean to admit Atheists, Deists, Mohammedans, Buddhists, or adherents of various forms of Paganism, but persons of Christian faith, and his liberality referred to differences as to non-essentials among those who held the Christian essentials, as he understood them.

The "only one condition" for admission into Wesley's simple religious society involved faith in the very essentials of Christianity, and, even then, that only admitted the party on probation.

The single condition, therefore, must be qualified, and how much it involves should be recognized.

VII

DOCTRINAL STANDARDS AMONG WESLEY'S FOLLOWERS

IT has been seen that the Reverend John Wesley, personally, had very profound convictions as to religious truth, and that much of the matter of his discourses, addresses, writings, and his "conversations" in his yearly conferences with his preachers, was made up of doctrinal statements and arguments in relation to doctrines.

Now we should ascertain whether his organized followers, in their religious organization, had any common, or commonly accepted, or recognized, religious doctrines.

That they had religious doctrines, of course, goes without saying, because, without them, they would not have come together as a religious body, or, if they did come together, there would have been no coherence, and, in course of time, they would have disintegrated, or would have had a violent disruption.

They must have had doctrines. That will be admitted. But the special question now is: Had Wesley's organized followers any recognized standards of doctrine?

Entering upon an inquiry as to the doctrinal standards of Methodism, one should seek to have the spirit and method of the historian and logician combined. We ask first:

How may we find the standards if there were any?

As a New York court decided: "In ascertaining the early and contemporary usage and doctrines" of a sect, "resort may be had to history, and to standard works of theology of an era prior to the existence of the dispute of controversy."

So we may resort to history, to standard works on theology, and to recorded doctrinal statements, particularly of the early times.

A standard, it should be remembered, is, literally, "that which is set up." It is something which is made a model or a basis of comparison with which similar things are to conform, as standard weights and measures.

So we seek such standards of Methodistic doctrines.

In a certain broad sense, at the beginning of Methodism, and long after, the Reverend John Wesley, himself, was the standard of doctrines for his disciples.

By the choice, consent, and continued acquiescence of the people and the preachers, John Wesley was, in the early period, the absolute head of Methodism.

In matters of government that was absolutely true; in matters of doctrine it was equally so; and in the Conferences the statements of doctrine were framed by him; while his discourses were doctrinal forms; and so with many of his other writings.

Under such a leader the organization which he developed could not have existed long without distinct and well-defined doctrines, which would speedily crystallize into a doctrinal system, which statement the facts of history abundantly prove.

The Wesleyan bodies have, and have had, their standards of doctrine quite from the very beginning,

and investigation further shows that the standards have varied somewhat in different periods, but that these changes have been progressive, as in a development from a living germ, expanding and adding though never departing from the primary type, or, changing the figure of speech, never shifting from its original basis and its general plan.

In this day the numerous Wesleyan bodies, wherever they exist, and under whatever differentiating names, have their recognized doctrinal standards, and all of them have a common family likeness.

Going back to the beginning it will be found that the first standard was John Wesley himself. That fact should be repeated, emphasized, and never lost sight of. Wesley created a standard through his utterances by tongue and pen. He was the living standard, and he vitalized the doctrinal teachings. His followers listened to him and learned from him, not only how to preach, but what to preach, and they read what he wrote, and, in his writings, found careful formulations of Scriptural truth, which, when placed together, formed a systematic theology.

That they had from the very beginning, and in greater fullness as the decades of Wesley's long life flowed on. So what Wesley said, his followers said, and, next to the Scriptures, a quotation from Wesley was a finality in an argument.

The second standard was the document called the General Rules for the United Society, which Rules the Reverend John Wesley himself drew up and published in 1743.

These Rules were mainly guides to practical living, but they also had some of the elements of an initial

Constitution for the young organization, and they also involved matters that were doctrinal, though some were by implication.

The third standard was found in the doctrinal declarations which were published in the Minutes of Wesley's yearly Conferences, the first of which was held in 1744, one year after the General Rules were prepared, and which Conferences continued thereafter from year to year. In these Minutes, particularly in the earlier years, much space was given to the definition and statement of religious doctrine, and, in 1749, Mr. Wesley took from the Conference "Conversations" of 1744, 1745, 1746, 1747, and 1748, the matter relating to doctrines, and printed his combination under the title of "Minutes of some late Conversations between the Reverend M. Wesleys and others," and this publication, because of the specific nature of the contents, was popularly called "The Doctrinal Minutes." This presentation of Wesleyan doctrines doubtless had a position of authority.

The fourth standard was found in John Wesley's Sermons, the first series of which, published in 1746, contained forty-three sermons. Then a later, and enlarged, edition contained fifty-three sermons, but as the fifty-third, in 1770, was Wesley's funeral sermon on the death of the Reverend George Whitefield, which, not being a doctrinal discourse, but almost entirely biographical, was not counted as a doctrinal standard, and only the fifty-two sermons were recognized as standards of doctrine.

When the First Series of John Wesley's Sermons appeared, it was perfectly natural that they should be received as authoritative expositions of the doctrines

preached by Wesley. Under this preaching the "United Society" had grown up, and without any legal decree it would have been natural that they accept them as standard expressions of their doctrines.

These sermons were published by Wesley in four volumes, in 1771, although many of them were delivered in the earliest years of his ministry, after his return from America—one as early as 1738, and another (the xviith) in 1733, two years before starting for America. The series was published first in 1746, with forty-three sermons. This was afterwards enlarged to fifty-three in the four volume edition of 1771.

In his preface to his collected sermons printed in 1747, Mr. Wesley says:

"The following Sermons contain the substance of what I have been preaching for between eight and nine years last past. During that time I have frequently spoken in public, on every subject in the ensuing collection: and I am not conscious that there is any one point of doctrine, on which I am accustomed to speak in public, which is not here, incidentally, if not professedly, laid before every Christian reader. Every serious man, who peruses these, will therefore see in the clearest manner what these doctrines are, which I embrace and teach, as the essentials of true religion."[1]

The titles and texts of the fifty-two sermons of Wesley which are recognized as among the standards are as follows:

I. Salvation by Faith. "By grace are ye saved, through faith" (Eph. ii. 18). Preached at St. Mary's, Oxford, before the University, June 18, 1738.

II. The Almost Christian. "Almost thou persuad-

[1] Wesley's "Sermons": New York, Lane & Scott, 1850, Vol. I, p. 5.

est me to be a Christian" (Acts xxvi. 28). Preached at St. Mary's, Oxford, before the University, July 25, 1741.

III. Awake Thou that Sleepest. "Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light" (Eph. v. 14). This sermon is by Charles Wesley, M. A., student of Christ Church. Preached on Sunday, April 4, 1742, before the University of Oxford.

IV Scriptural Christianity. "Whosoever heareth the sound of the trumpet, and taketh not warning; if the sword come, and take him away, his blood shall be upon his own head" (Ezek. xxxiii. 4). "And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost" (Acts iv. 31). Preached at St. Mary's, Oxford, before the University, on August 24, 1744.

V Justification by Faith. "To him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted to him for righteousness" (Rom. iv. 5).

VI. The Righteousness of Faith. "Moses describeth the righteousness which is of the law, That the man that doeth those things shall live by them. But the righteousness which is of faith speaketh on this wise," etc. (Rom. x. 5–8).

VII. The Way to the Kingdom. "The kingdom of God is at hand; repent ye, and believe the Gospel" (Mark i. 15).

VIII. The First Fruits of the Spirit. "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit" (Rom. viii. 1).

IX. The Spirit of Bondage and Adoption. "Ye have not received the spirit of bondage again unto fear;

but ye have received the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father" (Rom. viii. 15).

X. The Witness of the Spirit. Discourse I. "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God" (Rom. viii. 16).

XI. The Witness of the Spirit. Discourse II. "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God" (Rom. viii. 16). Preached 1767.

XII. The Witness of our own Spirit. "This is our rejoicing, the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation in the world" (2 Cor. i. 12).

XIII. On Sin in Believers. "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature" (2 Cor. v. 17).

XIV The Repentance of Believers. "Repent ye, and believe the Gospel" (Mark i. 15). Preached 1767.

XV The Great Assize. "We shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ" (Rom. xiv. 10). Preached at the assizes held before the honorable Sir Edward Clive, Knight, one of the judges of his majesty's court of common pleas, in St. Paul's Church, Bedford, on Friday, March 10, 1758; published at the request of William Cole, Esq., high sheriff of the county, and others.

XVI. The Means of Grace. "Ye are gone away from mine ordinances, and have not kept them" (Mal. iii. 7).

XVII. The Circumcision of the Heart. "Circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter" (Rom. ii. 29). Preached at St. Mary's, Oxford, before the University, on January 1, 1733.

XVIII. The Marks of the New Birth. "So is every one that is born of the Spirit" (John iii. 8).

XIX. The great Privilege of those that are born of God. "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin" (1 John iii. 9).

XX. The Lord our Righteousness. "This is his name whereby he shall be called, the Lord our Righteousness" (Jer. xxiii. 6). Preached at the Chapel in West Street, Seven Dials, on Sunday, November 24, 1765.

XXI. Upon our Lord's Sermon on the Mount. Discourse I. "And seeing the multitudes, he went up into a mountain; and when he was set, his disciples came unto him; And he opened his mouth, and taught them, saying, Blessed are the poor in spirit," etc. (Matt. v. 1–4).

XXII. Upon our Lord's Sermon on the Mount. Discourse II. "Blessed are the meek; for they shall inherit the earth. Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: . . . Blessed are the merciful:" etc. (Matt. v. 5–7).

XXIII. Upon our Lord's Sermon on the Mount. Discourse III. "Blessed are the pure in heart: . Blessed are the peace makers:" etc. (Matt. v. 8–12).

XXIV Upon our Lord's Sermon on the Mount. Discourse IV. "Ye are the salt of the earth: Ye are the light of the world:" etc. (Matt. v. 13–16).

XXV Upon our Lord's Sermon on the Mount. Discourse V "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets," etc. (Matt. v. 17–20).

XXVI. Upon our Lord's Sermon on the Mount. Discourse VI. "Take heed that ye do not your alms before men, to be seen of them," etc. (Matt. vi. 1–15).

XXVII. Upon our Lord's Sermon on the Mount. Discourse VII. "Moreover when ye fast, be not as the hypocrites," etc. (Matt. vi. 16–18).

XXVIII. Upon our Lord's Sermon on the Mount. Discourse VIII. "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth," etc. (Matt. vi. 19–23).

XXIX. Upon our Lord's Sermon on the Mount. Discourse IX. "No man can serve two masters," etc. (Matt. vi. 24–34).

XXX. Upon our Lord's Sermon on the Mount. Discourse X. "Judge not that ye be not judged," etc. (Matt. vii. 1–12).

XXXI. Upon our Lord's Sermon on the Mount. Discourse XI. "Enter ye in at the strait gate," etc. (Matt. vii. 13, 14).

XXXII. Upon our Lord's Sermon on the Mount. Discourse XII. "Beware of false prophets," etc. (Matt. vii. 15–20).

XXXIII. Upon our Lord's Sermon on the Mount. Discourse XIII. "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven," etc. (Matt. vii. 21–27).

XXXIV. The Original, Nature, Properties, and use of the Law. "Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good" (Rom. vii. 12).

XXXV. The Law established by Faith. Discourse I. "Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law" (Rom. iii. 31).

XXXVI. The Law established by Faith. Discourse II. "Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law" (Rom. iii. 31).

XXXVII. The Nature of Enthusiasm. "And Festus said with a loud voice, Paul, thou art beside thyself" (Acts xxvi. 24).

XXXVIII. A Caution against Bigotry. "And John

answered him, saying, Master, we saw one casting out devils in thy name, and he followeth not us; and we forbad him," etc. (Mark ix. 38, 39).

XXXIX. Catholic Spirit. "And when he was departed thence, he lighted on Jehonadab the son of Rechab coming to meet him; and he saluted him, and said to him, Is thine heart right, as my heart is with thy heart? And Jehonadab answered, It is. If it be, give me thine hand" (2 Kings x. 15).

XL. On Christian Perfection. "Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect" (Phil. iii. 12). Preached in 1741.

XLI. Wandering Thoughts. "Bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ" (2 Cor. x. 5).

XLII. Satan's Devices. "We are not ignorant of his devices" (2 Cor. ii. 11).

XLIII. The Scripture Way of Salvation. "Ye are saved through faith" (Eph. ii. 8).

XLIV Original Sin. "And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually" (Genesis vi. 5).

XLV The New Birth. "Ye must be born again" (John iii. 7).

XLVI. The Wilderness State. "Ye now have sorrow: but I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice and your joy no man taketh from you" (John xvi. 22).

XLVII. Heaviness through Manifold Temptations. "Now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations" (1 Peter i. 6).

XLVIII. Self-Denial. "And he said to them all,

if any man will come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily, and follow me" (Luke ix. 23).

XLIX. The Cure of Evil Speaking. "If thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone," etc. (Matt. xviii. 15–17).

L. The Use of Money. "I say unto you, Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness; that when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations" (Luke xvi. 9).

LI. The Good Steward. "Give an account of thy stewardship; for thou mayest be no longer steward" (Luke xvi. 2).

LII. Reformation of Manners. "Who will rise up with me against the wicked?" (Psalm xciv. 16). Preached before the Society for Reformation of Manners, on Sunday, January 30, 1763, at the Chapel in West Street, Seven Dials.

Take a few of the titles and one will see the scope of the Sermons. Thus:

"Salvation by Faith," "Scriptural Christianity," "Justification by Faith," "The Spirit of Bondage and of Adoption," "The Witness of the Spirit," "The Marks of the New Birth," "On Christian Perfection," "Satan's Devices," "The Scripture Way of Salvation," "Original Sin," "The New Birth."

Of course they assume and teach the existence of God, the Divine Sonship of Christ, Depravity and Sin, the Atonement made by Christ, Repentance, Saving Faith, Regeneration, and the authority of the Scriptures.

In recent years one objected to having to believe all that is in Wesley's Sermons and cited the teachings of Mr. Wesley on "The Cause and Cure of Earthquakes."

This discourse was preached after, and in reference to, the earthquake which shook London, in March, 1750, and which in Wesley's collected sermons is numbered, "Sermon LVII." This earthquake sermon was practical, interesting and forcible, and was based on the suggestive text: Psalm xlvi. 8—"Oh come hither, and behold the works of the Lord; what destruction he hath wrought upon the earth."

But the objector failed to remember that every sermon of John Wesley was not classed as a standard for doctrine, but only the fifty-two sermons. There were many other sermons by Wesley which his followers were not compelled to accept as of authority, and the objector overlooked the fact that the earthquake sermon was not among the fifty-two standards. He was, therefore, not required to accept all or any part of the earthquake discourse.

However, if a minister had in Wesley's time uttered such views as report says have been proclaimed publicly and privately in recent years, there would have been such a commotion in Wesley's Conference, that, compared with it, the English earthquake would have been a mild mannered movement, and the party seeking safety might have been impelled to fly for relief to Wesley's sermon on "The Cause and Cure of Earthquakes."

If recent reports are true as to certain utterances by some who imagine they are, or profess to be followers of Wesley, had they been uttered in his days, he would not have tolerated them, but would have promptly protested, and, then, if there was not reformation, would have speedily expelled the offending parties.

While the Wesleyans never held that all were under obligation to accept all the views in every one of John

Wesley's discourses, nevertheless they had a great respect for his many sermons as a whole.

Many of them are model sermons as to sermonic construction. Some of them are condensed outlines of sermons he preached, for Wesley was not a preacher of sermonettes, but frequently preached what to-day would be called long discourses.

Wesley's collected sermons form a great body of divinity, and whatever may be thought of a few discourses that may be regarded as somewhat peculiar, the sermons form a great symbol of Methodism that the different bodies of Wesley's followers never can afford to displace from the position of high honor they have occupied from their first issue.

Doctor Friedrich Loofs, Professor of Church History in the University of Halle, in his article on Methodism, in the *Realencyklopädie für protestantische Theologie und Kirche*, in 1901, has a very able and discriminating, as well as appreciative, study of Wesley and his work.

As to Wesley's sermons, Professor Friedrich Loofs says:

"Their charm was not imagination, neither pictures nor rhetoric; they were attractive, although Wesley did not preach short, by reason of the richness of their contents, the orderly arrangement of the thoughts, their practical earnestness, and their remarkable perspicuity. The sermons are doctrinal in the best sense of the word; in my opinion, Wesley's sermons may be read to-day with profit, and a translation of the best of them would find a fitting place in the series, 'Preachers of the Church.'" [1]

[1] A German collection of Sermons, *Die Predigt der Kirche*, Leipzig: Richter.

Coming as this does from a learned and disinterested source it is an exceedingly strong indorsement as well as a high compliment.

The fifth standard was the Reverend John Wesley's "Notes on the New Testament," which work was printed in 1755.

Naturally this publication also was received with great respect, and, as the "Notes" contained many comments on general and special doctrines, the "Notes" coming from the head of the Wesleyan "United Society" would at once be accepted with great deference, and as having the stamp of authority, within and throughout Wesley's "Societies."

This work was written when Wesley was seriously ill. But we let another tell the story:

"Owing to illness Wesley was compelled to spend the first six months of 1754 (æt 51) in retirement and comparative silence. Like Luther in Wartburg preparing the German Bible, Wesley, now in Bristol, began his Notes on the Holy Scriptures. In ten weeks, notwithstanding his disability, he had his Notes on the Gospels ready for the printer. In 1755 the Notes on the New Testament were published, and in 1765 the Notes on the Old Testament. The former is very largely, especially in the Apocalypse, a reproduction of Bengel's Gnomon. Wesley acknowledges in his Preface this indebtedness, also his indebtedness to Doddridge, Heylin and Guyse."[1]

Mr. Wesley, in order to protect the land and other property used for his congregations, prepared a Model Deed, in which his Sermons and his Notes on the New

[1] William I. Shaw, D. D., LL. D.: "Digest of Doctrinal Standards"; Toronto, 1895, pp. 17, 18.

Testament are distinctly designated as Standards of Doctrine, and the preaching of other doctrines in the edifices is positively prohibited.

As Doctor Shaw says:

"In 1749, when most of these sermons were published, the first Model Deed was drafted, and one of its requirements was: 'Provided always that the said persons preach no other doctrine than is contained in Mr. Wesley's Notes upon the New Testament and Four Volumes of Sermons.' This law is in force to this day in the British Wesleyan Church, from which it has been transferred to Canadian Methodism and perpetuated through the various unions which have taken place."[1] Doctor Shaw's use of the date is not quite clear, but there is no question about the quotation from the deed, and the point he makes.

Bishop Simpson states in his Cyclopedia of Methodism that "The Doctrinal Standards of the Wesleyan Methodists of England and of such Churches as affiliate closely with them are contained in Wesley's 'Notes on the New Testament' and in his sermons."[2]

The Discipline of the Methodist Church of Canada recognizes the doctrines in Wesley's "Notes on the New Testament, and in the first fifty-two sermons of the first series of his discourses, published during his lifetime."[3]

Attention has been called to the fact that "An able argument has been conducted by the Rev. Richard Green and others in England to prove that only the first

[1] Rev. Principal Shaw, D. D., LL. D.: "Digest of the Doctrinal Standards of the Methodist Church"; Toronto, William Briggs, 1895, p. 19.

[2] Bishop Matthew Simpson: "Cyclopedia of Methodism," p. 306.

[3] Principal Shaw: "Digest," p. 13.

forty-three sermons are authorized as standards. In Canada this question is obviated by the terms of the first paragraph in the Discipline as above quoted." [1]

The Wesleyans never have regarded everything that Wesley published, preached, or authorized as obligatory for doctrine. To be specific it never has been held by Wesleyans that every sermon preached by Wesley was standard and obligatory, but they specified the "Notes" and the fifty-two discourses as their standards for doctrine. The other writings were models and suggestive symbols.

In the British Wesleyan Methodist Church to this day the following question is asked the candidate for ordination:

"As you are to exercise your ministry under the direction of the Wesleyan Methodist Conference, I have further to inquire, whether you have read the first four volumes of Mr. Wesley's Sermons, and his Notes on the New Testament; and whether you believe that the system of doctrine therein contained is in accordance with the holy Scriptures?" and the candidate was to answer: "*I have read them, and do so believe.*"

This shows they have, and do recognize, the Sermons and the Notes on the New Testament as their standards of doctrine; that they have a system of theology which is set forth in the Sermons and the Notes; and that this system of doctrine is based upon and in harmony with the Scriptures.

So while the doctrines appeared in different publications the official standards of doctrine were Wesley's first fifty-two sermons and his Notes on the New Testament.

Following Mr. Wesley's example and the traditions,

[1] Principal Shaw: "Digest," p. 19.

as well as the law, British Methodism made much of the Wesleyan doctrines.

The British Conference took special pains to preserve the purity of its doctrines. Thus,

"In order to preserve the societies from heresies and erroneous doctrines, the Conference of 1807 very judiciously resolved, that —

"No person shall on any account be permitted to retain any official situation in our societies, who holds opinions contrary to the total depravity of human nature, the divinity and atonement of Christ, the influence and witness of the Holy Spirit, and Christian holiness, as believed by the Methodists."[1]

Wesley's followers always emphasized doctrines.

In 1834, the British Conference had very much to say about its Theological Institution, particularly as to the protection and preservation of its doctrines. Thus one tells that

"So subordinate was what is conventionally meant by scholarship, to sound Wesleyan theology, that the Conference did not appoint the classical tutor, but left it to the Committee to choose 'some young man,' while the fittest man of eminence in the entire Body was most carefully selected for the theologic chair, and, in addition to this, its most trusted leader was charged to 'watch particularly over the Theological Department.'

"That this sensitive solicitude about our doctrines was neither excessive nor misplaced can be denied by no one who has studied candidly and earnestly the

[1] Minutes, 1807, Vol. II, p. 403, and in Peirce: "Ecclesiastical Principles and Polity of the Wesleyan Methodists," Third Edition, London: City Road, 1873, p. 337.

genius, the mission, and the history of that wondrous work of God called Wesleyan Methodism.

"That this benign and mighty factor in the spiritual and social history of the British Empire, and America, was indebted for its marvellous success to its faithful, urgent presentation of the grand vital verities of the Christian revelation, preached with impassioned energy of conviction and experience, and borne home to the hearers by the Holy Ghost sent down from Heaven, was emphatically recognized by the mighty men of other Non-conformist Churches, who spoke in Wesley's Chapel at the centenary of Wesley's death, most signally by the lamented Dr. Dale, and by the great Church historian, Dr. Stoughton."[1]

The same British writer says:

"The 'decay of the doctrinal basis' of Methodism means *necessarily* the devitalisation of Methodist experience, for with Methodism, as with all forms of genuine Christianity, its life and morals, its organisation and its institutions are the native outgrowth of its doctrines."[2]

The same author says:

"Let us hope that the warning voice uplifted by the President at that Conference, especially his faithful, just exposure of the ministerial dishonor and dishonesty involved in retaining the stipend, the status, and the influence of a Methodist minister, whilst coolly disregarding the solemn and the annually repeated pledges and avowals by which they were achieved at first, and on the faith of which they are still retained."[3]

[1] Benjamin Gregory, D. D.: "Side Lights on the Conflicts of Methodism"; London: Cassell and Company, 1898, p. 183.

[2] Dr. Gregory: "Side Lights," London, p. 183. [3] *Ibid.*, p. 184.

As illustrating the strictness of the Conference, the same writer tells that a candidate, being examined before the assembled Conference, in England, referred to Tillotson's sentiment with regard to eternal punishment, whereupon the President exclaimed: "Tillotson is no authority here," and the author says "The Candidate was required to state his *own* view on the doctrine, that the Conference might judge of its accordance with our standards and the Scriptures. A very explicit statement was also required as to the divine obligation of the Christian Sabbath.

"Each candidate was required to pledge himself not to continue in our ministry if he should change his doctrinal tenets and convictions, so as to cease to believe and preach the doctrines to which he had given in his allegiance." [1]

The author also presents another instance when he says:

"A long time was taken up in discussing the case of a fine, well educated candidate, who had managed to mystify himself about the witness of the Spirit. A rather obscurely worded letter was read from him. A senior minister testified to his 'sincere and devout piety,' whereupon Doctor Bunting exclaimed: 'Mr. Wesley was all that *before his conversion.* We must have more than this, and must guard against frittering away our Methodist doctrines,' and a Mr. Reece said: 'I ask myself, How can a man whose views are so obscure guide our people right?'" [2]

The Reverend William Myles, who entered the ministry under John Wesley, in 1777, and was one of the

[1] Dr. Gregory: "Side Lights," London, pp. 360, 361.

[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 422, 423.

earliest of Methodist historians, wrote his "Chronological History of the People called Methodists of the Connexion of the Late Rev. John Wesley," in 1803, and which was printed in London, the same year.

Mr. Myles, who was in close touch with Wesley for many years, says: "Our doctrines have been the same from the first, and, as we think, purely Scriptural; the same which the *primitive Christians* held for the *three first centuries.*[1]

"It is plain from the New Testament that the doctrine of the Methodists is approved of God; for every good effect which followed the descent of the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost, and the preaching of the Apostles, has followed the preaching of the Methodist preachers, excepting the miraculous fruits of the Spirit." [2]

So the Methodists had doctrines at the beginning, the doctrines were believed to be the same as those held by the early Christian Church, and they remained the same through the intervening years from 1739, and in 1803 were the same as at the beginning.

These extracts indicate how the Wesleyans rated their doctrines, how they insisted upon conformity to their standards of doctrine, and how strict they were in their examination of the ministerial candidates before the entire Conference.

They had well understood doctrines, they had recognized standards of doctrine, and they sustained their standards.

[1] The italics were so indicated by Mr. Myles.

[2] William Myles: "History of the Methodists," 3d Ed. London, 1803, p. v.

VIII

CHARACTERISTICS OF METHODIST DOCTRINE

EVERY doctrinal system has its peculiar characteristics which differentiate it from other systems. The peculiar points may be few or many, but there is something which distinguishes it from other schemes or schools of religious thought. The difference may be in formulation, in emphasis, or in the essential ideas, but it is sure to have its own individuality.

So it is to be expected that the Wesleyan system of doctrine had its peculiarities or striking qualities that made it stand out among other systems and gave it its own distinctive character.

In seeking for the distinguishing trait, there may be varying results according to the point of view of the investigator, and one may indicate one thing, while another may think it is something else, but, taking all things into consideration, it should be said that the chief characteristic of Wesleyan doctrine is covered by the theological term Arminianism, in opposition to what is called extreme Calvinism.

These titles come from the names of two noted theologians of the sixteenth century, namely, John Calvin and James Arminius both of whom should have at least a brief mention.

A little while after the beginning of the Protestant

Reformation in Germany, there arose the great John Calvin, who was born at Noyon, France, on the tenth of July, 1509. From childhood he was a prodigy. Before he was twenty years of age he was a curé, and, it has been said, that at twenty-two he was the most learned man in Europe. Under the advice of his father, he took up the study of law. While at Bruges, he studied Greek under Melchior Wolmar, the Reformer, and embraced the doctrines of the Reformation. When in Geneva, he wrote his "Institutes of the Christian Religion," which reveal marvellous ability and vast learning, and this is said to have been the first great composition in argumentative French prose. The work is the more remarkable, especially, in view of the fact that when the first edition was published Calvin was only twenty-seven years of age.

Possibly if he had waited until he was fifty or older, he would have modified some of his statements, and softened some of his hard logic in regard to the divine decrees, predestination, and election.

Calvin became the great theological leader of the Reformation, and certain of his views of an extreme character, under the general name of Calvinism, soon dominated the greater part of the Protestant world, outside of Lutheranism.

The Reverend Doctor Philip Schaff, the Church historian, and himself a liberal Calvinist, in addressing a Pan-Presbyterian Council, in Edinburgh, Scotland, gave this picture of extreme Calvinism:

"The scholastic Calvinists of the seventeenth century mounted the Alpine heights of eternal decrees with intrepid courage, and revelled in the reverential contemplations of the awful majesty of God, which required

the damnation of the great mass of sinners, including untold millions of heathen and infants, for the manifestation of his terrible justice. Inside the circle of the elect all was bright and delightful in the sunshine of infinite mercy, but outside all was darker than midnight. This system of doctrine commands our respect, for it has produced the most earnest and heroic Christians; but it is, nevertheless, austere and repulsive. It glorifies the justice of God above his mercy; it savors more of the Old Testament than of the New, and is better at home on Mount Sinai than on Calvary. 'God is love,' and love is the only key that can unlock the deepest meaning of his words and works."

The special doctrines of extreme Calvinism on the divine decrees, predestination, election, and the relation of infants in the light of the divine sovereignty, held full sway over a great part of the world for a long time.

At last another leader arose. He was James Arminius, who was born in the town of Oudewater, Holland, in 1560. With great learning and consummate ability as a disputant he arrayed himself against the Augustinian theory of unconditional predestination, which had been revived and strengthened by Calvin and others. His opposition has been styled that "gigantic recoil from Calvinism, than which no reaction in nature could have been more certainly predicted."

While professor in the University of Leyden, he was the first to receive from that institution the degree of Doctor of Divinity. Arminius died on the nineteenth of October, 1609, at the early age of forty-nine. Arminius has been pronounced "one of the most learned men of a learned age."

Of the services of Arminius to theology, Richard Watson, the Wesleyan theologian, says: "They have also left on record, in the beautiful, learned, eloquent, and above all these, the Scriptural system furnished by the writings of Arminius, how truly man may be proved totally and hereditarily corrupt, without being a machine or a devil; how fully secured, in the scheme of the redemption of man by Jesus Christ, is the divine glory, without making the Almighty partial, wilful, and unjust; how much the spirit's operation in man is enhanced and glorified by the doctrine of the freedom of the human will, in connection with that of its assistance by Divine grace; with how much lustre the doctrine of justification by faith in Christ shines, when offered to the assisted choice of all mankind, instead of being confined to the forced acceptance of a few; how the doctrine of election, when it is made conditional on faith foreseen, harmonizes with the wisdom, holiness, and goodness of God, among a race of beings to all of whom faith was made possible; and how reprobation harmonizes with justice, when it has a reason, not in arbitrary will, the sovereignty of a pasha, but in the principles of righteous government." [1]

After the decease of Arminius the discussion continued with great bitterness and all Holland was arrayed into two hostile theological camps.

In 1618 the Arminians, or followers of James Arminius, also called Remonstrants, presented a brief statement to the Synod of Dort, and the Synod condemned the "five articles" in which the Arminians had ex-

[1] Watson: "Miscellaneous Works," Vol. VII, p. 476. McClintock and Strong: "Cyclopædia," New York. Harper Brothers: "Arminianism."

pressed their opinions on the theological points in dispute, and this was followed by severe persecution which caused many to leave the country. In 1625 they were permitted to return, and in 1630 a decree authorized them to build churches and schools. Under this permission a school was founded at Amsterdam, and in it Simon Episcopius was its first professor of theology, and he became a great leader of the followers of Arminius.

Many eminent men classed themselves among the disciples of James Arminius, but some of them corrupted the original teaching by introducing a form of semi-rationalism.

Arminianism to some extent modified Calvinism in France. In Germany, the Lutherans sympathized with the views of Arminius. In England, for a time, Arminianism became a negative term meaning merely a negation of Calvinism, but it was under Wesley that pure Arminianism, with the doctrine of the freedom of the human will, took the commanding position it has continued to hold ever since.

John Wesley was born in 1703, a century, less about six years, after the death of James Arminius, who died in 1609.

Wesley became the great leader in the modern battle against Calvinism. He precipitated the war by preaching a noted sermon on this subject, and this caused the alienation between him and the Reverend George Whitefield who in theory adhered to Calvinistic doctrines.

The Arminianism of Wesley and Methodism, however, is not precisely the Arminianism of Holland, which grew out of the teachings of James Arminius

and later modified by others. Indeed, there are some very marked distinctions.

The Reverend Professor Wilbur F. Tillett, of Vanderbilt University, observes that, "Unfortunately, the new system which was so strongly and scripturally presented in the writings of James Arminius and Simon Episcopius developed, in its later representatives, semi-Pelagian and rationalistic tendencies which are as repugnant to modern Arminianism as represented in the Methodist Church as they are to Calvinism.

"With the degenerate and unsound school of religious thought in Holland which now bears the name of Arminianism or Remonstrant theology Methodism has very little agreement. The Arminianism of Holland, even in its earliest and purest form, was but a theological and intellectual system at best. Its highest purpose seems to have been to prove that the doctrines of Arminianism as opposed to Calvinism constituted the true doctrinal system of Christianity. Proving this point it had, or seemed to have, nothing more to do."[1]

The same author remarks: "That the opponents of Arminianism so long misunderstood and misrepresented it is not altogether their fault. Not having a concise and authoritative expression of this system accessible, they were compelled to get their views and representations of Arminianism from the writings of individual men. Hence the system has been held responsible for the vagaries of all who claimed to be Arminians. The semi-Pelagian Limborch has been quite as authoritative a teacher of it as Episcopius or Arminius himself, and the imperious and ill-tempered Archbishop Laud has

[1] Dr. W. F. Tillett: "A Statement of the Faith of World-Wide Methodism" (Pamphlet); Nashville, 1907, p. 20.

been made to represent it quite as much as John Wesley, the devout but semi-Arian Whitbey quite as much as the evangelical Richard Watson or John Fletcher." [1]

This, perhaps, must be applied more to the common people and general readers, rather than the scholars, for the latter had, or could have had, access to the writings of Arminius and others of authority on that side.

Wesley and his coadjutors, however, turned scholastic Arminianism from mere scholasticism into something exceedingly practical, and gave it a simple meaning and direct application that even the plain people could readily understand, and, when thus translated for them, they could take up the propositions and arguments and discuss the question in a most effective manner.

In regard to that Professor Tillett says:

"The Arminianism of Wesley and the Methodists, however, was intensely spiritual and evangelical. With theology as such they had little to do. They loved not theology for its own sake, but only as it was an embodiment of the truth of the gospel capable of being transmuted into spiritual power for the salvation of sinners and the sanctification of believers. The theology of Wesley and his followers is the Arminianism of Holland baptized with the Holy Ghost and infused with spiritual life. It is the theology of a Church that is 'Christianity in earnest,' that believes in and enjoys experimental religion, that is on fire to save souls and carry the gospel to the whole world. While the Arminianism of the Remonstrants was content to prove the moral free agency of man and an unlimited atonement

[1] Dean Wilbur F. Tillett: "Faith of World-Wide Methodism"; Nashville, 1907, p. 18.

as being true against the erroneous Calvinistic doctrines of election and partial redemption, the Arminianism of Wesley, accepting them as true, began to practice them, to live them out, to plead with every man to decide for Christ because he was free, and to carry the gospel to every man because Christ died for all. The theology of Methodism is Arminianism put into practice for the salvation of souls and the evangelization of the world. The theology of Methodism, therefore, is quite different from that of the early Remonstrants, even in its purest form, and should always be designated as Evangelical or Wesleyan Arminianism. It contains and emphasizes many doctrines that concern the experience of religion in the soul and the salvation of sinners and the spread of the gospel, about which early Arminianism was practically silent." [1]

The genius who blended and molded the doctrines of Methodism, and then presented them to the world, was John Wesley.

As the Reverend Anson West, D. D., of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, said in the Centennial Conference of Episcopal Methodism, in 1884:

"Methodism as an entity, as an organization, is the outcome, is the result, of that system of doctrine so strongly defined, so clearly interpreted, so powerfully emphasized, so ably defended, and so persistently preached by Mr. Wesley." [2]

Doctor Anson West followed this by saying:

"The opposition which Mr. Wesley met from the

[1] Rev. Wilbur F. Tillett, D. D., LL. D.: "Faith of Methodism"; Nashville, 1907, pp. 20, 21.

[2] Rev. Anson West, D. D.: "Journal of Centennial Conference of Episcopal Methodism," held in Baltimore, 1884, p. 247.

Church of England, the many doctrinal controversies which he had with the clergy of that Church, the many disputations which he had with Arians, Antinomians, Atheists, Calvinists, Deists, Jews, Materialists, Moravians, Mystics, Papists, Pelagians, Socinians, Unitarians, and the rest, demonstrate that he was set for the defense of the principles of the Christian religion. He had on the armor and he contended for the faith. He ordered his work with judgment, and in zeal did he perform it. He fought the battle of the warrior, not with confused noise and garments rolled in blood, but with burning and fuel of fire, and he brought forth a system of doctrine replete with beauty, symmetry, and life. And the Methodists have a creed, in which they have their unity and their oneness." [1]

Again Doctor West continues:

"Whether or not Mr. Wesley ever compiled a confession of faith, it is nevertheless certain that he gave to the world as a result of his labors a compendium of doctrines, a system of theology, a complete Scriptural creed—a creed instinct with life, emphasized in its own emphasis, the like of which is not found anywhere else. He did give to his followers a system of doctrine which, as a whole, no other sect has claimed, and upon which most of the sects, if not all, have made war. Mr. Wesley set forth his system of Bible truth, and here was a new and distinct creed." [2]

Once more we quote from Doctor Anson West, who observes that,

"Whether or not we should say the system of

[1] Rev. Anson West, D. D.: "Journal Centennial Conference of Episcopal Methodism," 1884, pp. 251, 252.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 252.

Methodism had a doctrinal origin, it is quite certain it never existed without doctrine. Methodism grew up on its doctrines, and without these would never have existed. Without its theology it would never have had a history.

"Whatever importance may attach to spiritual life and to the agencies for keeping revival fires burning, it is evident that these could no more be had without the pure word of God, without the doctrines of the Gospel, than a harvest could be reaped in the Autumn without seed to sow in the Springtime. Methodism differs from all other religious bodies in its theology as well as in its spirit and methods; and in its dogmas is its power, for without these its methods would be inefficient and its spirit lacking. Its spirit and methods did not produce its doctrines, but *vice versa*. Whether 'earlier or later Methodism has ever constructed a creed or a confession of faith,' it is certain that Methodism has a creed, and has had from the beginning, and a creed which, as a whole, no other sect as yet tolerates."[1]

What Mr. Wesley sought was not something new but something true, and his ultimate test was the teaching of the Scriptures. He did not seek that which was new in doctrine, but he found that which he believed was true, and yet his manner of presenting it, and the circumstances of the time, gave it the appearance and effect of newness.

Mr. Wesley, indeed, said to his followers:

"Your principles are new in this respect, that there is no other sect of people among us (and, possibly, not in the Christian world) who hold them all in the same

[1] Dr. Anson West: "Centennial Conference of Episcopal Methodism," Baltimore, 1884, p. 252.

degree and connection; who so strenuously and continually insist on the absolute necessity of universal holiness both in heart and life; of a peaceful, joyous love of God; of a supernatural evidence of things not seen; of an inward witness that we are the children of God; and of the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, in order to any good thought, or word, or work. And perhaps there is no other set of people, (at least, not visibly united together,) who lay so much and yet no more stress than you do on rectitude of opinions, on outward modes of worship, and the use of those ordinances which you acknowledge to be of God. So much stress you lay even on right opinions, as to profess that you earnestly desire to have a right judgment in all things, and are glad to use every means which you know or believe may be conducive thereto; and yet not so much as to condemn any man upon earth merely for thinking otherwise than you do; much less, to imagine that God condemns him for this, if he be upright and sincere of heart. On those outward modes of worship, wherein you have been bred up, you lay so much stress as highly to approve them; but not so much as to lessen your love to those who conscientiously dissent from you herein. You likewise lay so much stress on the use of those ordinances which you believe to be of God, as to confess there is no salvation for you if you wilfully neglect them: and yet you do not judge them that are otherwise minded; you determine nothing concerning those who, not believing those ordinances to be of God, do, out of principle, abstain from them."[1]

[1] Wesley's "Advice to the People called Methodists," written October 10, 1745, and printed the same year. See Wesley's "Works," Amer. Ed., New York, Vol. V, p. 250.

In the beginning of this "Advice to the People called Methodists," Mr. Wesley properly defines what he means by the name. He says: "By Methodists I mean a people who profess to pursue (in whatsoever measure they have attained) holiness of heart and life, inward and outward conformity in all things to the revealed will of God; who place religion in a uniform resemblance of the great Object of it; in a steady imitation of him they worship, in all his imitable perfections; more particularly, in justice, mercy, and truth, or universal love filling the heart, and governing the life."

They were "a people," already with a certain distinctiveness. They recognized the "revealed will of God" as their guide and endeavored to conform thereto; they sought "holiness of heart and life" so that their religion was both internal and external; they imitated the "imitable perfections" of God and so manifested godliness; while toward human beings there was love in the heart which showed itself "in justice, mercy, and truth"; and their living was controlled by love.

This defined a Methodist as to his inner and outer life, but the Wesleyans had their doctrinal principles, and the intellectual had its proportionate part in relation to the feelings of the heart and actions of the life.

Wesley said the "principles are new" in some sense. Even the old doctrines had a newness, and, if the doctrines were not specifically new in the light of all the Christian centuries and the Primitive Church, nevertheless, to the people and the times, they seemed new in their discovery and resurrection, in their grouping, in their interpretation and application, and in the

new emphasis placed upon the several doctrines and the related groups. They were as old as the New Testament but, as they were preached, as they were believed, and as they were lived, they seemed new, and, like eternal truth, they were ever new to the souls of men in every generation.

Professor Tillett remarks that, "It is none the less true that that new life in its growth and maturity has produced new doctrine.

"As, however, the 'new life' was, strictly speaking, nothing but a return to, and a fresh realization of, the religious experience of apostolic times, so the 'new doctrines' which Methodism brought to the Church and the world in the eighteenth century were the old doctrines of primitive and apostolic Christianity reaffirmed. But certain is it that Methodism now stands for a distinct type of evangelical Christian doctrine quite as much as it does for a distinct type of Christian experience and life."[1]

The fact, however, is that Wesley preached his doctrines before there was any organism or any spiritual life therein. The doctrines preceded the organization and all its manifestations.

Bishop Holland N. McTyeire, of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, says in the first chapter of his "History of Methodism":[2]

"It was not new doctrine but new life the first Methodists sought for themselves and for others. To realize in the hearts and conduct of men the true ideal

[1] Dr. W. F. Tillett: "A Statement of the Faith of World-Wide Methodism" (Pamphlet); Nashville, 1907, pp. 8, 9.

[2] Bishop McTyeire, "A History of Methodism," Nashville, Tenn., 1888, p. 13.

of Christianity, to maintain its personal experience, and to extend it—this was their design; and their system of government grew out of this, and was accordingly shaped by it."

There is truth in this as to the matter of polity, but the doctrines preceded the experimental life and the method of reaching others. They had fixed their doctrines through an interpretation of the Scriptures as to God and humanity, as to sin and salvation, as to redemption through Jesus Christ, as to justification and regeneration, and as to the freedom of the will, before they could persuade men to believe and act, or act and believe. The teaching and the belief preceded the Christian living, and the living was sustained by the continuing faith.

The extract from Wesley's "Advice" shows that his "Methodists" had "opinions" and that they laid "stress" upon what they regarded as "right opinions," that they "earnestly" desired to have "a right judgment," and gladly used "every means" to secure it, and yet they were not bigots and uncharitable toward others. They had their own views and held them, but they did not "condemn" others "*merely* for thinking otherwise," or assume that God condemned the others because they differed while they were "upright and sincere of heart."

So also in other matters, beside "rectitude of opinions" they held firmly to their own religious practices as to "modes of worship," the "ordinances," and kindred matters, the Wesleyans did not "condemn" those who differed, and did not pass judgment upon or "determine" anything "concerning" them. They had their own convictions but they were charitable as to

others and continued to have fraternal love for Christians who varied in their views and practices. These were Methodistic characteristics.

John Wesley brought into existence, or assembled, or arranged the fullest, the most practical, and the most satisfying system of Christian doctrine known and tested in modern times, and, as Dean Tillett has said:

"We believe that the type of doctrine for which world-wide Methodism stands and has ever stood represents the most reasonable, self-consistent, and scriptural system of Christian doctrine in existence." [1]

Wesleyanism had doctrines, and, more, had a system of doctrines, in which the several doctrines stood harmoniously together in a consistent whole. Further, it had its doctrinal standards which gave forms of doctrinal expression to guide the thinking of the people, and to which appeal could be made to determine the correctness of such expression by others. Then these doctrines were simple, Scriptural, and practical, and these were marked characteristics. They pointed out sin and presented salvation and, under and through them all, there was the sound, profound, and yet simple, philosophy of the freedom of the human will, which, when applied, meant a free salvation, a full salvation, and that "whosoever will" shall be saved from sin, the penalty of sin, and the power of sin. These were characteristics of Wesley's doctrinal system.

[1] Rev. Wilbur F. Tillett, D. D., LL. D.: "Faith of World-Wide Methodism" (Pamphlet); Nashville, 1907, p. 9.

IX

EARLY AMERICAN METHODISM AND ITS DOCTRINES

EARLY American Methodism was an offshoot from British Wesleyanism. It was a branch from the same tree, or, more exactly, a rootlet from the same original root. There was no formal transplanting, but a shoot from the parent stock sprang up on the western shore of the Atlantic.

It started and grew, first, through individual Wesleyans who had gone to the English colonies of North America, and, on their own motion, began to introduce Wesleyan services, and to duplicate parts of the British Wesleyan organization, in the sixties of the eighteenth century, and, secondly, and later, through missionaries and officers sent by the Reverend John Wesley, the chief overseer and supreme executive of the Wesleyan movement, the first missionaries crossing the Atlantic to Philadelphia, in seventeen hundred and sixty-nine.

Early American Methodism, therefore, beginning in colonial times, when the Colonies were British, was itself British, like the Methodism in Great Britain.

In other words, American Methodism in the beginning was Wesleyanism. Wesley was its head in America as he was in England and throughout the British Isles, and so in America the English usages and government were gradually introduced, and, as rapidly as the new circumstances would permit, were duplicated and developed.

The American Methodists, for example, had the same kind of local organization with the same sort of Class System as in England. The preacher had the same duties and the same kind of authority, and he gave the people the same kind of preaching, with the very same doctrines, and in a few years there developed the Annual Conference, which, adapted to the new country, was practically a replica of Wesley's English Conference, and, likewise, was under the supreme control of John Wesley.

This type of Wesleyan organization in America existed under the English colonial government up to the American Revolution, and then continued for a number of years through the war for independence, and into the early years of the American Republic.

As with the British Colonies themselves, American Methodism had at first a religious colonial existence, like as a colony of English Wesleyanism, and as related to Wesley himself.

As already seen, this early American Methodism was actually a part of English Methodism, and the American Wesleyans were under the same ecclesiastical government as the Wesleyans in England, and, hence, being under the same government, they had the same doctrines, and the same standards of doctrine, so that, with the same government and in the same organism, they recognized the same theology.

In other words, as American Methodism was thus related to British Wesleyanism, Wesley was its supreme authority, and Wesleyan standards of doctrine were its standards of doctrine.

The American Wesleyans, at the very beginning, had The General Rules, Wesley's Fifty-two Sermons,

and Wesley's Notes on the New Testament, and also had the Minutes of Wesley's Yearly Conferences, including the Doctrinal Minutes, to which, by 1773, and thereafter, were added the Minutes of the American Conferences.

Excepting the American Minutes, these were the standards of English Wesleyanism, and these were the standards of doctrine recognized by American Methodism, but the American Minutes also recognized the Wesleyan doctrines as well as the Wesleyan polity.

These facts were legally recognized at a very early date. Thus some of the very early deeds to Methodist property in America contained the doctrinal restrictions as they were found in England.

Thus in the deed to the John Street property, in New York City, the deed for the ground recites that the ministers shall "preach no other doctrine than is contained in the said John Wesley's Notes upon the New Testament and his four volumes of sermons."

This deed was dated "the second of November, in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and seventy," and the Reverend J. B. Wakeley, in his "Lost Chapters Recovered from the Early History of American Methodism," says, "This is the first deed for a Methodist house of worship in America."[1]

This, however, seems to be an error, for the first church in Philadelphia was deeded to Miles Pennington, a member of the Society in Philadelphia, on the 14th of June, 1770, and on the 11th of September, 1770, he deeded it over to a board of trustees for the Society. So the first deed was that of the Philadelphia church.

[1] Dr. J. B. Wakeley: "Lost Chapters"; New York, 1858, p. 57.

The deed for the first Philadelphia church, known as Saint George's, contained the following proviso:

"Provided always that the said persons preach no other doctrine than is contained in the said John Wesley's Notes upon the New Testament and his four volumes of sermons."

These citations from the two deeds in Philadelphia and New York clearly show that at the very beginning of American Methodism the standards of doctrine in America were the same as those in Great Britain.

Other examples of this doctrinal limitation can, we think, be found in other very early deeds of a little later date. All these were copied from the British form, as the societies in America then belonged to the Wesleyan body in England. The extracts from the deeds of the two very early churches above mentioned are sufficient to demonstrate that American Methodism at its beginning legally recognized the Wesleyan doctrinal standards.

Further, the American Wesleyans a number of times officially acknowledged and formally readopted the standards of doctrine of the Wesleyans in Great Britain.

Thus the very first American Conference, which was held in 1773, in Philadelphia, formally recognized "the doctrine and discipline of the Methodists," and acknowledged "the authority of Mr. Wesley."

In that first Annual Conference in America, the Minutes show the following questions and answers:

"1. Ought not the authority of Mr. Wesley and that conference (the English) to extend to the preachers and people in America, as well as in Great Britain and Ireland?

"*Ans.* Yes.

"2. Ought not the doctrine and discipline of the Methodists, as contained in the minutes, to be the sole rule of our conduct who labor, in the connection with Mr. Wesley, in America?

"*Ans.* Yes."

This shows conclusively that the doctrines of the English Wesleyans were the doctrines of the American Methodists.

In the American Conference of 1781, the very first question formally propounded in the Minutes is:

"*Ques.* 1. What preachers are now determined, after mature consideration, close observation, and earnest prayer, to preach the old Methodist doctrine, and strictly enforce the discipline as contained in the Notes, Sermons, and Minutes published by Mr. Wesley so far as they respect both preachers and people," etc.

There was unanimous agreement, and the preachers' names are appended. So that again they recognized that their doctrines and standards were Wesley's sermons and "Notes," in connection with the Minutes, as they were in Great Britain.

Then in the American Methodist Conference, held in April and May, 1784, the Minutes show the following question and answer:

"*Ques.* 21. How shall we conduct ourselves toward European preachers?

"*Ans.* If they are recommended by Mr. Wesley, will be subject to the American Conference, preach the doctrine taught in the four volumes of Sermons and Notes on the New Testament, keep the circuits they are appointed to, follow the directions of the London and American Minutes, and be subject to Francis Asbury as general assistant, whilst he stands approved by

Mr. Wesley and the Conference, we shall receive them; but if they walk contrary to the above directions, no ancient right or appointment shall prevent their being excluded from our connection." [1]

The War of Independence was over and the Treaty of Peace had been signed, and the new understanding was needed, in view of the probable incoming of other preachers.

This action of 1784 shows that, at this time, the recognized standards were "the doctrine taught in the four volumes of Sermons and Notes on the New Testament," written and published by John Wesley, and in the English and American Minutes.

This is what is phrased by the Rev. Jesse Lee, one of the early preachers then in the Conference, as "the Methodist doctrine," when he says, in his "History of the Methodists": "We agreed that if any European Methodist preachers should come over, recommended by Mr. Wesley, and would be subject to the American Conference, preach the Methodist doctrine," etc.[2]

These facts clearly show that early American Methodism, in its earliest form, and as the organism matured, down into 1784, held the same doctrines, and officially, formally, legally, and actually affirmed those which were then recognized by the Wesleyans on the other side the Atlantic Ocean, and the doctrines of Wesleyan Methodism were everywhere the same, in America as well as in Europe.

[1] "First Printed Minutes of American Conferences," 1773–1794. Philadelphia: 1795, pp. 72, 73.

[2] Jesse Lee: "History of the Methodists," 1810, p. 85. Thomas B. Neely: "Governing Conference in Methodism," New York, 1892, pp. 213, 214.

X

AMERICAN METHODISM REORGANIZED— THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH

AMERICAN Wesleyanism prospered in its initial form as an outcropping of British Methodism, and then as more directly under the Reverend John Wesley and those he designated to represent him, and even during the War of Independence, when the Americans were left mainly to themselves, all the British preachers, save one, having returned to their own country, their Methodism continued to spread throughout the new nation, and preserved the old doctrinal characteristics.

There was, however, a growing feeling that something more was needed, and, especially, as to the rank and functions of the ministry, for in every particular the American Wesleyans were a Church with the exception of an ordained clergy.

The sacraments they received when possible but not from the preachers in their conference. There was a preaching ministry, but it left the people without the sacraments from the men who imparted the living word, and under whose preaching they were convinced and converted, and to whom they looked as their pastors and spiritual guides. After bringing their converts into the Church of Christ, these ministers of the Word, because they had not been ordained, did not give

their flocks the symbols of the Church in Baptism and the Lord's Supper, and to many it seemed an anomaly which their logic could not explain.

Repeated appeals were made to Mr. Wesley asking that he would secure for their preachers and the people a complete ministry, or perfect the ministry they had, by empowering the preachers to minister the sacraments.

At last Mr. Wesley perceived that circumstances had so changed that he could consistently and ought to meet the needs of his American followers in this particular.

Previously Wesley had hesitated because heretofore the Church in the Colonies was under English law, and the Anglican bishop in England had jurisdiction, according to the State Church, but, through the independence of the Colonies, the authority of the Church of England no longer controlled. So to speak the English State Church had ceased to exist in the United States of America, and there British church law no longer was in force.

So, shortly after the treaty of peace between Great Britain and the new Republic, by which the independence of the United States was duly recognized, Mr. Wesley planned the reorganization of his followers in the new nation, so that they would become a complete Church in themselves, with a complete ministry of their own, including ordination and the sacraments.

Wesley's provision for the reorganization of American Methodism was arranged in the year 1784, though, doubtless, it had occupied his mind for some years.

Wesley decided to create a regularly organized, and duly recognized, Church to succeed the Church of

England in the new Republic, which Church would have resemblances to the Anglican Church, for example, in such features as an Episcopal organization, with a high supervisional system; certain formal services which would be similar to those of the State Church of England, though modified; and also a Service Book based on the English Book of Common Prayer, which book of forms of service he called "The Sunday Service of the Methodists in North America. With other Occasional Services."[1]

In Wesley's plan there was no withdrawal of the American Methodist Societies from the Church of England, for the Church of England no longer existed in the new Republic, and so that they could not withdraw from it, and, further, the American remains of the Church of England had not yet been organized into "The Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America," and so they could not withdraw from it.

Furthermore the Wesleyan Societies never withdrew from the Church of England, for never, in Great Britain, or America, or anywhere else, had they belonged to the Church of England. Individuals may have been in the State Church, and many had been, but the Societies never were under the control of Anglican Bishop, Archbishop, Convocation, or of the Church of England in any way, so that the Societies could not withdraw from that of which they never were a part.

From the beginning the Wesleyan Societies were independent bodies, and, in addition, through the independence of the Republic, there ceased to be any English State Church in the United States, but, if

[1] London: Printed in the Year MDCCLXXXIV.

there had been, it would have had no authority over the Wesleyan Societies.

When the Protestant Episcopal Church was formed, it said in the preface to its Prayer Book, which was ratified on the 16th of October, 1789:

"When in the course of divine Providence these American States became independent with respect to civil government, their ecclesiastical independence was necessarily included; and the *different religious denominations* of Christians in these States were left at full and equal liberty to model and organize their *respective Churches* and forms of worship and discipline, in such a manner as they might judge most convenient for their future prosperity, consistently with the Constitution and laws of their country."

That was just what John Wesley thought, and why, in this particular time, and in this particular way, he planned for the reorganization of his American followers, so that they would have all necessary Church privileges, when they "were left at full and equal liberty to model and organize" "consistently with the Constitution and laws of their country."

So in his letter of September 10, 1784, addressed to his American disciples, Mr. Wesley wrote:

"The English government has no authority over them (the American States), either civil or ecclesiastical, any more than over the States of Holland.
But no one either exercises or claims any ecclesiastical authority at all. . . . As our American brethren are now totally disentangled, both from the State and the English hierarchy, we dare not entangle them again, either with the one or the other. They are now at full liberty simply to follow the Scriptures and the prim-

itive Church. And we judge it best that they should stand fast in that liberty wherewith God has so strangely set them free." [1]

The preface of the Protestant Episcopal Book of Common Prayer, of 1789, has such a strong resemblance to this letter of Wesley, that one might almost think that those who wrote the preface might have read Wesley's letter of September, 1784, but, of course, that may be a mere coincidence. However, the principles are essentially the same.

On such principles Wesley prepared for the reorganization of American Wesleyanism.

In his Service Book which he provided for a complete Church, and in which, besides the Morning and Evening Prayer, and the Litany, the Sacramental, and other Church Services, he had forms for setting apart a regular and fully authorized ministry.

Not only were these and other necessary things provided, but he said in his circular letter that, owing to the changed conditions in America, he could now do what he had hesitated to do before, and so in that letter he remarked: "My scruples are at an end, and I conceive myself at full liberty, as I violate no order and invade no man's rights, by appointing and sending laborers into the harvest."

In the same letter he also said: "Lord King's account of the primitive Church convinced me, many years ago, that bishops and presbyters are the same order, and consequently have the same right to ordain."

Therefore, even if he was only a presbyter, he felt

[1] Wesley's "Works," Amer. Ed., Sunday Service, 1784, pp. 311, 312. Thomas B. Neely, D. D., LL. D.: "Evolution of Episcopacy and Organic Methodism"; New York, 1888.

that, particularly under such circumstances, he had a right to ordain. He had long years before been ordained a priest, or presbyter, in the Church of England, and in, and for, "the Church of God," as the ritual recites, but, in the course of these years, he had become much more than a presbyter in the Church of England, and more than a mere presbyter anywhere.

He had become the head of an extensive ecclesiasticism which was not controlled by the Church of England, or by any other Church. He was its head—chosen to be its head when it began, and, with the constant acquiescence of preachers and people, he continued its head for forty-five years, or nearly half a century, and what was true of him and the United Society in England, in the matter of independence, was especially true of his Societies in America, and his relation to them.

In the organization were not only unordained preachers, but also regularly ordained presbyters, and, if Wesley was to be regarded as a presbyter, he was a presbyter over presbyters, directing them in their work, and, if he was a presbyter over presbyters, then, according to Wesley's definitions, and that of great Church authorities, he was an ecclesiastical overseer, superintendent, or bishop; and John Wesley himself said: "I firmly believe I am a scriptural ἐπίσκοπος (episcopos, bishop), as much as any man in England or in Europe."[1]

So in Bristol, England, on the first of September, 1784, the Reverend John Wesley, the supreme head, and overseer, of Methodism, unable to secure ordination from the English bishops, created a presbytery of

[1] *Methodist Magazine*, 1786, p. 50.

three regularly ordained clergymen who were in the Wesleyan organization, and ordained two of his preachers, namely, Richard Whatcoat and Thomas Vasey, presbyters or elders, to start the line of ordained ministers in the reorganized Methodism in the United States of America; and, the next day, Wesley says, he "set apart as a superintendent, by the imposition of my hands, and prayer (being assisted by other ordained ministers), Thomas Coke, doctor of civil law, a presbyter of the Church of England, and a man whom I judged to be well qualified for that great work."

Doctor Coke, a graduate of Oxford, with the degree of D. C. L., had been regularly ordained a presbyter in the Church of England, but he was one of Wesley's preachers, and a minister in his Conference. John Wesley also indicated Francis Asbury, who was in America, to be a superintendent of equal rank with the Reverend Thomas Coke, D. C. L. Wesley called them Superintendents, but Mr. Wesley understood that those who thus superintended ecclesiastically over presbyters and the Church were *episcopoi* or bishops. The nature of the service determined the title, and for it there were synonyms which might be used interchangeably. He did not use the title bishop, but he gave them the thing, the work, the office.

So Wesley provided for the Americans an ordained ministry, and also overseers for the management of the work and the direction of the reorganized body, and all this he felt he had a right to do as the historic and legal head of American Methodism, and also because the Americans had asked his special aid.

But he seems to have considered that his followers in the United States had also something to do for them-

selves and the right to do it, as he says in his circular letter: "They are now at full liberty simply to follow the Scriptures and the primitive Church."

Doctor Thomas Coke, and the new elders, carrying the plan of reorganization with them, sailed from Bristol, England, on the 18th of September, 1784, and landed at New York, on the third of November, of the same year.

After consultations here and there, and, particularly, after consultation with Francis Asbury, at Barratt's Chapel, near Frederica, Delaware, and at the home of Mr. Philip Barratt, where Doctor Coke and Mr. Asbury were entertained, it was decided to call the conference of preachers to meet in the city of Baltimore during the last week of December of that year.

The Conference began on the twenty-fourth of December, 1784, in the Lovely Lane Chapel, in the city of Baltimore, and, because the session covered the Christmas season, it has been called "The Christmas Conference."

At this time, and in this place, the Conference became the Organizing Conference of the new Church. As Asbury says: "It was agreed to form ourselves into an Episcopal Church,"[1] and, in view of their history, and for the sake of distinction, the Conference decided to prefix the word Methodist and call it "The Methodist Episcopal Church," and so it became "The Methodist Episcopal Church in America,"[2] or "in the United States of America," which were understood to mean the same thing at that time, though the latter was the exact legal title of the country.

[1] Bishop Asbury's Journal, New York, 1821, p. 377.

[2] So called in the certificate given Bishop Asbury by Bishop Coke, after he was consecrated.

Using the "full liberty," which Wesley had mentioned, the organizing Conference decided various matters for itself and in its own way. Thus, instead of regarding Doctor Coke and Mr. Asbury as their superior officers, simply because they had been selected by Mr. Wesley, the Conference for itself, and unanimously, elected each of them to be a superintendent, or bishop.

Asbury had been made a deacon on the 25th of December, ordained an elder on the 26th, and elected and consecrated a superintendent (or bishop) on the 27th day of the same month. Others were elected deacons and elders, and were ordained; Wesley's Service Book was accepted; a code of laws, called the "Discipline," was adopted; the founding of a college was decided upon; and, after a session of ten days, the organizing Conference closed its session on the third of January, 1785, and its members went out as the representatives of the new Church, with a complete organization, and bearing the title, "The Methodist Episcopal Church in America," or "The Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States of America." [1]

[1] For a fuller treatment of these and kindred matters, see: Bishop Thomas B. Neely's "Evolution of Episcopacy and Organic Methodism": New York, Methodist Book Concern, 1888; and Bishop Thomas B. Neely's "History of the Governing Conference in Methodism": New York, Methodist Book Concern, 1892.

XI

HAD THE NEW CHURCH STANDARDS OF DOCTRINE?

THE Methodist Episcopal Church, formed in the last week of December, in 1784, started off as a Church, with a ministry, a membership, and a government.

Now to be a complete Church it must have religious doctrines, and this raises the question, Had the new Church any religious doctrines, and any standards of doctrine, or was it without doctrines and without standards of doctrine?

It is startling, or even absurd, it would seem, even to ask whether a Church is without doctrines, for it seems inconceivable that a Church could be totally without religious doctrines and standards of doctrines, for how could the Church have had organizers and adherents, and have adhesiveness and power of continuance, without some form of religious belief, and, indeed, without some common belief, how could the people have been brought together? The fact that a Church exists and has existed in any external form for generations, is proof that it must have commonly recognized doctrines.

In the case of any denomination, say, for example, "The Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States of America," the necessary presumption is that it holds

some doctrines and that it has certain standards of doctrine, and the presumption is so logical and necessary, that if anybody declared that the Methodist Episcopal Church had no doctrines or doctrinal standards, the burden of proof to the contrary would be on the one making such a declaration, and he would be expected to prove his allegation, and, unless he did bring forward satisfactory proof, the natural and necessary assumption would be that the Methodist Episcopal Church must have had, and has, common doctrinal beliefs, and that somewhere, in some form, it has had, and has standard expressions of these, to it, essential doctrines.

But something more than presumption, or assumption will be, and ought to be, demanded, for there are those who want, and should have, positive proof. We must, therefore, seek evidence that will be clear and convincing.

The underlying questions must be considered and answered, and the particular question before us, therefore, is this: Had, and has, the Methodist Episcopal Church any doctrinal standards, and, if it had, and has, such standards, what are they, and where may they be found?

To properly reply to this query requires some historical research, some logic, and a little patience in making the investigation.

The question, then, is, first, Had this new Church any doctrines and any standards of religious doctrine at the organization and when the organization was completed?

A preliminary question is this: Had the preachers and people who were reorganized any religious doc-

trines or doctrinal standards just before they were reorganized into the new Church?

The prompt and complete answer to that inquiry is that the organization from which the Church emerged had both doctrines and doctrinal standards. That has already been shown. The doctrines were well known as "Methodist doctrines," and the standards of doctrine were distinctly specified, and officially as well as formally recognized time and again.

Thus the American Conferences of 1781 and 1784 specifically recognized "the old Methodist doctrine" "as contained in the Notes, Sermons, and Minutes published by Mr. Wesley," or, as it was phrased in the Conferences of April and May, 1784, they were to "preach the doctrine taught in the four volumes of Sermons and Notes on the New Testament," and "follow the directions of the London and American Minutes," which contained doctrine as well as polity.[1]

So the very year the American Wesleyans were reorganized, and only about seven months before they were organized into a Church, they had formally and legally declared their continued acceptance of the Wesleyan doctrines, and had specifically stated what were their standards, and these were their recognized standards when they walked into the organizing Conference on the 24th of December, 1784. They, therefore, had these standards when they began the work of that Christmas Conference, and the Conference essentially was the same Conference that met in May. In other words, those who organized the new Church already had standards of doctrine which they had accepted, and to which they were committed, and these standards

[1] See Minutes of the Annual Conferences of 1781 and 1784.

were the Wesleyan Standards contained in Wesley's Fifty-two Sermons, Wesley's Notes on the New Testament, the Minutes, and, we may say, the General Rules, which all recognized.

The matter may be put in a different form, as follows:

As the preachers and people had doctrines and standards of doctrine, immediately before they evolved, or were developed, into the new Church, there arises an interesting and important question, namely, Whether, or how far, if in any degree, this reorganization of American Methodism carried over into the new Church the doctrinal standards of the period immediately preceding, and in, the organizing moment?

In answer to that inquiry, it is plain that the reorganizers carried over with them their existing and continuing doctrinal convictions, and, unless there was some action to the contrary, their accepted doctrines and standards of doctrine went with them into the reorganization.

The fact is that, in the organizing Conference, there was no formal or informal repudiation, or discarding, of their old doctrines. There was no action of any kind doing away with their old doctrinal standards, and there was no informal action that could be construed as an abandonment of their Wesleyan doctrines which they had had from the beginning.

The conclusion must be, therefore, that the organizers of the new Church did not divest themselves of their old doctrines, to which they had been, and then were, so greatly attached, but that they adhered to them, and carried them over into their new organization. That they carried them over and continued to hold the old doctrines and the old standards is proven by many historic facts.

Further, the old organization never was disbanded, but, from it, the new came with a few additions, as, for example, the ordained ministry, and many things, indeed, most things, that existed under the old form, simply went over into the reorganization, without any reënactment, and without any question being raised. As a matter of fact, the old forms continued unchanged, unless they were slightly modified by the few new features of polity.

It will be observed that the American Methodists, when formed into the Methodist Episcopal Church, did not, and never did, readopt the General Rules, and yet they existed at the beginning, always continued, and the Constitution showed that they were a part of the then Constitution of the Church.

They simply went over with the preachers and people, who always had had them, into the reorganization, a reorganization that simply meant some additions to what they already had. The development was an evolution with certain accretions, and not an absolutely new reconstruction, after the dissolution of the old organization, for there was no such dissolution, and, thus, the old doctrines went over into the new Church, in the same way, and continued to be the actual belief of preachers and people, and continued in their teaching.

Another question is as to whether the new and developing ecclesiasticism modified the then existing standards, or acquired any new standards, of doctrine? If the old continued, was there anything new or additional of a doctrinal character?

At this point, it is to be observed, that history shows at least that there was some change in the doctrinal symbols of American Methodism, that an important

change was made, primarily, by Wesley himself, and that this change was by addition, being an additional formulation, which, however, did not contradict, neutralize, or destroy, or even modify, the former doctrinal standards of these preachers and people.

The Reverend John Wesley prepared what he called "The Sunday Service for the Methodists in North America. With other Occasional Services." This as before stated was prepared in 1784, and was sent over for the reorganization. In making this book, Wesley took the historic Prayer Book, or Book of Common Prayer, of the Church of England, as the basis of his new book, and, by elimination, condensation, and other changes, made a revised Common Prayer for the new organization in America. It contained, however, much beside the "Sunday Service," and this book, made by Wesley and accepted by the organizing Conference, became the first authoritative book of The Methodist Episcopal Church, being prior even to the Book of Discipline, and may be said to have been woven into the very constitution of the new Church when the Church was organized.

A number of the documents or parts of this Service Book contained important doctrinal expressions, but one in particular was very specifically and wholly on the matter of doctrines, and this portion now demands special attention.

The important change here suggested was made by the Reverend John Wesley, the head of Methodism, and the author of the then accepted standards of doctrine specially found in his Fifty-two Sermons, and his Notes on the New Testament.

Of course it is to be presumed that Wesley, who had

made the standards already accepted, would not destroy or nullify them or their teachings by another formulation, and, whatever may be the force of this presumption, the fact is that Mr. Wesley did not disturb the former and existing standards, and neither did the organizing Conference.

This new formulation to which we refer consisted of Twenty-four Articles of Religion which Mr. Wesley had prepared for the reorganized American Methodism.

Mr. Wesley had authority to make these Articles of Religion, for he was the head of the Wesleyan organization, and was recognized as such, wherever organized Wesleyan Methodism was found, in America as well as in Europe, so that whatever he ordered for his American disciples was by them duly received, and duly acknowledged as of authority.

Now, it is evident, that with the addition of the Articles of Religion, the Methodist Episcopal Church was fairly well supplied with doctrines and doctrinal standards.

The General Rules emphasized practical and moral living, and religious observances; Wesley's Fifty-two Sermons gave doctrinal statements, explanations, and applications, and specially emphasized the internal and external religious life in its several stages and its various phases; the Notes of Wesley on the New Testament emphasized Biblical interpretation of the truth in the form of explanatory comments; while the Articles of Religion gave a more abstract and intellectual, or scholastic, formulation of the fundamental doctrines of general Christianity, and also declarations in opposition to certain erroneous views held by other bodies then and now.

In addition to these standards the new Church had the doctrinal statements in the Minutes of the British, and, also, the American Conferences, and now the doctrinal expressions in Wesley's "Sunday Service. And other Occasional Services," including the Apostles' Creed, which was in the Morning and Evening Prayer and in the Baptismal Service for those of Riper Years, all of which had been accepted by the organizing Conference.

With all these before the ministers and members of the new Church, there was no necessity of their going astray from sound doctrine or from Scriptural righteousness.

With these facts it would seem that no one can doubt that, at its formation, the new Church, in 1784, had its doctrines and its doctrinal standards.

And now, at the present time, it would seem strange if any one should fail to see that the Methodist Episcopal Church has its doctrinal standards, or be bold enough to declare that it has no such standards, when, for more than a century, both in its Constitution and its statute law, the Church has been using the specific and technical expressions, "standards of doctrine," and "our standards of doctrine," thus declaring that the Church has had, and has, doctrines and "standards of doctrine." [1]

[1] "Book of Discipline," 1916, Constitution Article X, Section I.

XII

THE ARTICLES OF RELIGION

ONE of the most important things which Mr. John Wesley did for the American reorganization was the preparation of the series of Articles of Religion as symbols of doctrine and as standards of doctrine for the new Church.

Added to the doctrinal standards the American Methodists already possessed, they gave a greater completeness of churchly form, and by the style in which they were phrased gave a formal dignity in harmony with the full status as a Church, while this statement of the doctrines of general Protestant Christianity brought the reorganized body more fully in line with the historic Churches.

Possibly with this thought of historic Christianity before him, just as he based his Service Book on the Church of England Book of Common Prayer, so, likewise, he based his Articles of Religion for the American Methodists upon the Anglican Articles of Religion.

The English Articles numbered thirty-nine, but Mr. Wesley eliminated a number of Articles, thus reducing his Articles to twenty-four, and also made many changes in the Anglican Articles which he retained.

The Thirty-nine Articles contained some of the best formulations of the centuries, and the best thought of the leaders of the Reformation, and, as a whole, they were greatly respected by Mr. Wesley. He had known

them from his childhood. He had studied them in his youth and in his riper years, and, now, an Octogenarian, with full mental power, having to prepare Articles of Religion for a new Church, he takes the best out of the thirty-nine, and makes twenty-four Articles of Religion.

This was not simply for the purpose of brevity, and certainly not because he regarded the work as a mere form, but because he had learned to differ from a number of things in the Thirty-nine Articles, so that the changes he made indicated his doctrinal differences with the doctrinal teachings of the Thirty-nine Articles, and also the variation of Wesleyanism from some of the doctrinal formularies of the Church of England. Wesley found the basis of his Articles in the Anglican Thirty-nine Articles. In this he was wise, for the Anglican Articles were the fruitage of the ages, and, later, the product of the Protestant Reformers, but Wesley's Twenty-four Articles were a revised edition and something more, for by his eliminations, and other changes, he made his Articles say something very different from the voicings of the Thirty-nine.

The Early Protestant Reformers got rid of Romanism, while Wesley went further and got rid of Calvinism. More than that, by other changes, through elimination and insertion, he indicated, as already stated, his own doctrinal differences with the teachings of the Thirty-nine Articles, and showed the variation of crystallized Wesleyanism from the Anglican doctrines. Further he thus indicated what he wanted the new Church to believe.

The Thirty-nine Anglican Articles, however, are deserving of profound respect for their contents, and for

their linking with preceding ages, but Wesley's Twenty-four Articles gave a modernized view of these historic formulations of Protestant Christianity. As Professor William I. Shaw has said:

"The Thirty-nine Articles have deservedly commanded the highest praise from Protestant Christendom. But we do not hesitate to say that the abridgement by John Wesley in 1784 to the twenty-five (twenty-four[1]) Methodist Articles has greatly improved them by eliminating both types of error—Calvinistic Predestination and Antinomianism on the one hand, and Sacramentarianism on the other—and has formulated for Methodism a body of traditional dogma which is most helpful to Christian faith. Fourteen Anglican Articles are omitted, seven are modified, and eighteen are adopted unchanged."[2]

In all this, it is to be remembered that Wesley was not changing the Articles of the Church of England. The Anglican Articles in the Church of England remained just the same as they had been before. Wesley was not making a revolution in the standards of the English State Church and for that Church. What Wesley was doing was making Articles of Religion for another and a new Church in a distant country where the Church of England no longer had any authority, and where, indeed, it did not exist.

That he had a right to do, for the American Methodists acknowledged him as their founder, father, and supreme authority, and the English State Church had

[1] One of the twenty-five articles was not made by Wesley, but by the organizing Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

[2] William I. Shaw, D. D., LL. D.: "Digest of Doctrinal Standards," Toronto, 1895, p. 15.

no right to interfere with them, and they were not interfering with it, nor with English ecclesiastical law.

The Articles of Religion which Wesley prepared for his followers in the United States of America were intended to be a comprehensive formulation of fundamental Christian doctrines, as in the main were the Articles of Religion in the Church of England, in the Continental Churches, and in other Churches.

Being prepared by Mr. Wesley, they were on that account, and that account alone, if there was no other ground, to be regarded as by sufficient authority, and to be recognized as such without question by his followers.

Wesley had a right to prepare the Articles of Religion because he was the ecclesiastical head, and also the doctrinal head of Methodism, at that time, and the Methodist preachers would feel it to be their duty to accept such a theological formulation from him, and to accept it even without any formal action on their part.

But Mr. Wesley was providing for the reorganization of his American Methodism, which reorganization would be a new organism, or, in other words, a new Church, and, being a new and different organism, or new Church, it would have a new status, and that new status would carry with it, and develop in it, new powers which would inhere within the natural and recognized rights of self-government, or of a self-governing body, and that the Americans soon had occasion to realize and to assert.

The organizing Conference of the new Church at once felt, that being on a new basis, it had a right to say something about the characteristics of the new ecclesiastical organization, and, so, of itself, accepted

things Mr. Wesley had prepared, and, among them, it accepted the Articles of Religion which Mr. Wesley had formulated for this reorganized Methodism, so that the Articles existed by double authority, namely, that of Wesley and that of the new Church itself.

Thus these Twenty-four Articles became its own formulated statements of religious doctrines as far as they went, or, in other words, a supreme standard of doctrines, by its own free act, as well as because of their construction by Methodism's ecclesiastical head, John Wesley.

Thus Wesley's Twenty-four Articles, by this double action, became the Articles of Religion of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States of America, or to restate it:

These Articles of Religion, therefore, were in force by double authority. First, by the act of Mr. Wesley in formulating them for his followers in the new American Republic, and, second, by their being accepted, or adopted, by the new Church itself in its organizing Conference, and this new organization, being an organized Church, possessing the rights and powers of such an organization, had a right to decide such things for itself, and, so, these Twenty-four Articles became, by this double authority, the Articles of Religion of the Methodist Episcopal Church in America, or in the United States of America.

In other words, these Articles, therefore, became doctrinal expressions, or standards, of the new Church.

It is not here and now our province to argue the original, or present, necessity for having all, or any, of these Articles, or to prove their accuracy, but simply to show what they are, and what is their status and

authority in the Methodist Episcopal Church. To undertake to present and prove these points would require a theological treatise of considerable bulk, which the present purpose at this place does not permit.

It is plain that in these Articles Wesley and the Church placed carefully worded expressions of its beliefs as to certain fundamental points of doctrine. Wesley might have made more Articles and covered other points, but he did not choose to do so, and the Church simply did what it did, in adopting what Wesley had formulated, and at this time we have to deal with that single fact.

So these Articles became the new Church's Articles of Religion, commanding the Church, and to be maintained by the Church, and those who are in the Methodist Episcopal Church must accept them while the Articles hold their present position of authority and the parties remain in the Church.

While, in a sense, it makes no difference where Mr. Wesley got his material for the Twenty-four Articles, whether he copied every word, or wove them all out of his own consciousness, or mingled his own expressions with phrases framed by others, yet, where he found the basal material, what changes he made, what fresh thought he may have introduced, and why he eliminated the old and interwove the old and the new, will throw much light upon the result and go far to elucidate his Twenty-four Articles of Religion; but, further, no matter how Wesley constructed them, or out of what materials, when he finished the work the Articles were his, and, no matter what their genesis, when the Church accepted or adopted them, they became the Articles of Religion of the new Church.

These Articles of Religion were printed in the Service Book, called the "Sunday Service," which Wesley printed in 1784 and sent over the same year to America, and which was adopted by the new American Church, and they were reprinted in the Second Edition of this Sunday Service, which new edition was printed in London, in the year 1786.

Wesley recommended its use in Great Britain, and the recommendation was followed, and the same Service Book, with the Articles, was reprinted for the use of the Wesleyan Methodist Church in England, and, in later years, was slightly modified. In all these issues the Articles were printed, and they have continued to be the Articles of Religion of various Methodistic bodies.

It has been said that the Thirty-nine Articles were written by Calvinists. That puts it too strongly, though there was Calvinistic influence. But, even so, it does not follow that all these articles were technically Calvinistic. Neither does it follow that Calvinists wrote nothing unless what they wrote was tinged with the peculiarities of extreme Calvinism. Calvinistic writers have produced many good things, and, on many matters, they have written that to which a stalwart Arminian would not object but heartily commend. In judging such a matter the specific thing must be considered by itself and on its own merits, and not by an indiscriminate judgment which, because a few things were adjudged faulty, would condemn everything. Taking the Thirty-nine Articles of Religion together, and considering the age in which they were written, they made a remarkably fine body of belief. If there were some Calvinistic influences, there were also Lu-

theran influences, and also those that belonged to neither the one or the other.

It has been suggested that the Thirty-nine Articles were written in the sixteenth century, and that, therefore, their authors could not write for the time when the Methodist Episcopal Church was organized, or as one has suggested, that the Thirty-nine Articles were written over three hundred and fifty years ago, and over two hundred years before the birth of the Methodist Episcopal Church, as though the lapse of time made them worthless now or for a Church formed in 1784. But that proves nothing to the point. The Apostles' Creed was formed long centuries before that, and the doctrinal statements in the New Testament long before that, and yet they are fresh and forceful to-day.

Further, a Church should not want temporary statements of doctrine. It needs eternal truth. So the older the better, if the thing be correct, though there may be new applications of the old truth. In Christian morals and religion there is nothing new to-day. What the Church needs is not that which is new but what is true, and the presumption is that the old Articles contained something that was good and true, and, hence, worth preserving. Their authors wrote the Thirty-nine Articles in the sixteenth century, but, strictly speaking, they did not write Wesley's Twenty-four Articles, which were adopted by the newly created Methodist Episcopal Church in December, 1784.

The Thirty-nine and the Twenty-four Articles evidently were not precisely the same. In the first place, there was a difference in the number. Twenty-four were not thirty-nine. There were fifteen articles less. That elimination made a vast change, and then Wesley

made great changes in the remaining articles, so they were not the same.

Wesley made the Twenty-four Articles, if one pleases, out of and upon the thirty-nine by striking out, inserting and otherwise changing, and, when he was through, the twenty-four were very different from the thirty-nine, and taken together could not be said to have been written in the sixteenth century.

When Wesley prepared his Twenty-four Articles for his American followers, any Calvinism that may have been in their progenitors was eliminated, and what was left of the former articles showed marked changes in language, in setting, and in their entire atmosphere.

Wesley was an Arminian, and well knew what Calvinism was, and, when he finished and approved his work, we may be sure there was no dangerous Calvinism left in the revised and improved Articles of Religion which he had constructed. No matter who started them, they were Wesley's at the end, and he was a rigid Arminian.

As a sample of the changes Wesley made, take the Ninth Article of the Church of England. It read, and now reads:

"*IX. Of Original or Birth Sin*

"Original sin standeth not in the following of Adam (as the Pelagians do vainly talk), but it is the fault and corruption of the Nature of every man, that naturally is engendered of the offspring of *Adam;* whereby man is very far gone from original righteousness and is of his own nature inclined to do evil, so that the flesh lusteth always contrary to the spirit; and therefore in every person born into this world it deserveth God's wrath and

damnation. And this infection of nature doth remain, yea in them that are regenerated; whereby the lust of the flesh, called in the Greek φρονημα σαρκός (phronema sarkos), which some do expound the wisdom, some sensuality, some the affection, some the desire of the flesh, is not subject to the Law of God. And although there is no condemnation for them that believe and are baptized, yet the Apostle doth confess, that concupiscence and lust hath of itself the nature of sin."

Now we notice, in the first place, that Wesley struck out more than half the article. Beginning with "And therefore in every person born into this world it deserveth God's wrath and damnation," Wesley struck out that and all that follows to the very end, and it is plain that he did not do that merely for the sake of brevity, but that he struck all that out because he did not want to say those things, and because he did not want to obligate his people to believe them.

But that is not all, but, from the first part of the article, he struck out the words "fault and"—"but it is the fault and corruption of the nature of every man." He was willing to say that there was something of the nature of "corruption," but he would not say it was the "fault" "of every man."

Then, a little later on, he struck out "so that the flesh lusteth always contrary to the spirit." He did not want to affirm that it was "always contrary to the spirit," so he took that out and closed the paragraph and article by adding the words, "and that continually," so that though there might be a weakness or the possibility of wrong doing, yet the individual might be without doing wrong.

Thus he made his Seventh Article, something

which never was written by the framers of the Thirty-nine Articles, and it reads as follows:

"*VII. Of Original or Birth Sin*

"Original sin standeth not in the following of Adam (as the Pelagians do vainly talk), but it is the corruption of the nature of every man, that naturally is engendered of the offspring of Adam, whereby man is very far gone from original righteousness, and of his own nature inclined to evil, and that continually," which is very different from the corresponding article of the Anglican Thirty-nine, the ninth, and it is very different from what some persons call "total depravity."

This is only one sample of the changes in, and the reconstruction of, some of the English Articles which Wesley made.

Some say the Methodist Episcopal Articles of Religion are inadequate, or, in other words, that Wesley did not put into his Articles of Religion all that might have been put into such a document. The answer to this is that it was not necessary to mention every possible thing, for such an instrument only required a comparatively brief presentation of a few fundamental principles, and that Wesley's aim was to reduce this formulated standard to a scriptural minimum, as though he meant to demand no more from the faith of the people than was absolutely necessary, and beyond that to allow as much latitude as possible to the individual, as long as he believed and maintained the essential doctrines. It is also to be remembered that Wesley's followers had also other standards of doctrine beside the Articles of Religion.

One writer has said that: "Many of our important and cardinal doctrines are not even alluded to in these Twenty-five Articles."[1]

Then, if they are "our important and cardinal doctrines," being our doctrines, they were to be found somewhere else, and as they were to be found elsewhere, it was not necessary to repeat them in the Articles.

The fact is that these so-called "important and cardinal doctrines" were in previously prepared standards of doctrine, and can be found there still.

Wesley did not mean to put all his beliefs into the Articles of Religion, or he would have done so, but he put enough therein to answer his purpose, and the need of the new American Church, while the other doctrines, alluded to as "our important and cardinal doctrines," were still in the previous standards already described.

So if it be asked why Mr. Wesley did not put into his Twenty-four Articles certain special doctrines which he and his ministers had been preaching for at least forty-five years, a sufficient answer is that it was unnecessary, because these doctrines were already imbedded in the standards which the preachers and people had possessed for more that forty years, and continued to possess.

Again it may be asked by what right Mr. Wesley, a clergyman of the Church of England, changed the Thirty-nine Articles to Twenty-four.

In the first place, we repeat, he did not change the Articles of Religion of the Church of England. They still remained the Thirty-nine Articles of, and for, and

[1] Dr. W. F. Tillett: "The Faith of World-Wide Methodism" (Pamphlet); Nashville, 1907, p. 22.

possessed by, the Church of England. What he did was, as the head of another ecclesiasticism, to make Twenty-four Articles for a new Church, and it made no difference where he got his material, or on what he based his articles. That he did base them on the Thirty-nine was a compliment to the Anglican body, and a natural thing for him to do as he was brought up under them.

In the second place, his Societies and his Society work were never under Bishop or Convocation, and never were under the Church of England. What he did was in his capacity as an authority outside the State Church.

One has directed attention to the anti-Romish spirit of Wesley's articles. He says:

"About one-third of our Twenty-five (24) Articles, pruned as they were by the hand of our great leader, are yet plainly anti-Romish. The eleventh Article (supererogation), fourteenth (purgatory), fifteenth (speaking in a tongue not understood by the people), sixteenth (clause against five Romish sacraments), eighteenth (transubstantiation, etc.), nineteenth (of both kinds), twentieth (sacrifice of the mass), twenty-first (celibacy)—these eight of the twenty-five were written (in whole or in part) for the purpose of denying Romish errors."[1]

Exactly so. The Thirty-nine Articles were the utterances of Protestants not long after the dawn of the Reformation, and, now, as Romanism still exists, and the world still needs these articles, the Church should be glad that they are still in the Thirty-nine and the Twenty-five.

[1] Dean Tillett: "The Faith of Methodism," p. 23.

Romanism is the same, and more so, in its teachings, and the new generations need the same protest and the same Protestantism, and, if these articles were needed when originally written, or as recast and reused by Mr. Wesley, they still are needed, for the errors still persist, and Romanism still is a mighty and aggressive force against Protestantism and its truth.

The fact is that though Wesley did not print his Twenty-four Articles of Religion until 1784, and the American Methodists did not adopt them until later in that year, Wesley and his followers had never been without them.

They were familiar with the Thirty-nine Articles, and also with Wesley's views, and with their other indicated standards and there were also, in the background, and at the front, the great fundamental teachings of general Christianity.

But the preparation and adoption of the Articles of Religion served an important purpose, for, as Principal Shaw says, "The Articles more than the Notes and Sermons, bring Methodism into harmony with catholic faith,"[1] that is to say with the historic Christian Church and historic doctrine.

[1] Principal William I. Shaw, Wesleyan Theological College, Montreal, "Doctrinal Standards," Toronto, 1895, p. 17.

XIII

AN ADDED ARTICLE

WESLEY had made Twenty-four Articles, but taking up the second edition of the "Sunday Service," published in 1786, it will be discovered that, according to that edition, the Twenty-four Articles had become Twenty-five.

The explanation of the changed number is due to the fact that The Methodist Episcopal Church had inserted another article between the Twenty-second and the former Twenty-third, making the new article the Twenty-third, and then changed the numbering of the two following articles to Twenty-four and Twenty-five.

The new article thus inserted related to the independent national government of the United States of America, and, so, the new Church had Twenty-five Articles and it has never had any more.

This new article, though it did not appear in the "Sunday Service" until 1786, was, however, really adopted by the organizing Conference in 1784, but as the Articles of Religion had been previously printed before the reorganization in the "Sunday Service," which was brought over in sheets, the additional article could not then be inserted, and, so, it appeared in the second edition of the Service Book, which was published in 1786, or two years later than the first.

Doctor John Emory thus refers to the added Article:

"The article of religion contained in the prayer book of 1786 which was not in that of 1784 is that now numbered the 23d,—'Of the Rulers of the United States of America,' which had been adopted by the General Conference of 1784, and was most properly inserted in the ensuing edition of the prayer book of 1786." [1]

Doctor David Sherman follows Emory with this observation: "Such an article was framed, however, at the Christmas Conference (1784), when the Church was organized. It could not be printed with the others (at that time), because they had been previously printed in England." [2]

Mr. Wesley wrote no Article on the United States of America, or its Rulers, but it was not through lack of sympathy with the Republic. Once the independence had been gained, though a loyal Briton, the new nation had his best wishes, but his Articles of Religion were written only the year after the Treaty of Peace, and the Constitution had not yet been drafted, and so he seemed uncertain about official titles and the exact nature of the new government.

However, in his Service Book, he endeavored to cover the ground. Thus, in one of the prayers in the "Sunday Service" of 1784, Wesley had a recognition of the country and its officers, as follows:

"We beseech thee also to save and defend all Christian Kings, Princes, and Governors; and especially

[1] John Emory, D. D., "Defence of Our Fathers," New York, Carlton & Porter, Preface, November, 1827, p. 76.

[2] David Sherman, D. D., "History of the Discipline," New York, 1874, p. 126. Sherman takes this from Robert Emory's "History of the Discipline," New York, 1843, p. 108.

thy Servants, the Supreme Rulers of these United States; that under them we may be godly and quietly governed,"[1] etc.

Again, in the forms for "Morning Prayer" and "Evening Prayer," instead of prayer for the ruling monarch in Great Britain, Wesley substituted this short prayer, entitled "A Prayer for the Supreme Rulers":

"O Lord our heavenly Father, high and mighty, King of Kings, Lord of lords, the only Ruler of princes, who dost from thy throne behold all the dwellers upon earth; Most heartily we beseech thee, with thy favour to behold the Supreme Rulers of these United States; and so replenish them with the grace of thy Holy Spirit, that they may incline to thy will, and walk in thy way; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*"[2]

In the Service Book of 1786, this prayer, and a substitute prepared by the Americans, entitled: "A Prayer for Rulers," appears in both the Morning Prayer and the Evening Prayer, as follows:

"O Lord, our heavenly Father, high and mighty, the Ruler of all that govern, who dost from thy throne behold all the dwellers upon earth; Most heartily we beseech thee with thy favour to behold the Rulers of these United States, the Congress, the General Assemblies, the Governors, and the Councils of State; and so replenish them with the grace of thy Holy Spirit, that they may alway incline to thy will, and walk in thy way: Endue them plenteously with heavenly gifts, grant them in health and wealth long to live; strengthen them that they may vanquish and overcome all the enemies of their country; and finally, after

[1] In "Prayers for Various Occasions," "Sunday Service," 1784.

[2] Wesley's "Sunday Service," 1784.

this life, they may attain everlasting joy and felicity; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*"

Wesley recognized the United States of America and its Rulers in these prayers, and in other ways, thus showing his interest, and yet the question may be pressed: How did it happen that Wesley did not have an article on the National government and those in authority?

Doctor Robert Emory observed that: "Although Mr. Wesley inserted, in the Liturgy which he prepared for the American Methodists, a prayer 'for the Supreme Rulers of the United States,' yet he probably did not think himself sufficiently familiar with the subject to draw up an article respecting 'the civil magistrates.' Such an article was framed, however, at the Christmas Conference, when the Church was organized. It could not be printed with the others, because they had been previously printed in England. It was inserted, however, in the next edition of the Prayer-book, in 1786.[1]

Yet Mr. Wesley may have thought it unnecessary to place such matter among the Articles of Faith.

The Anglican Articles had, as the Thirty-seventh, one with the title: "Of the Civil Magistrates," stating that the reigning monarch "hath the chief power in this realm of England," and other dominions, etc., "and is not, nor ought to be, subject to any foreign Jurisdiction" "and should rule all states and degrees committed to their charge by God, whether they be Ecclesiastical or Temporal" . and "The Bishop of *Rome* hath no jurisdiction in this Realm of England," etc.

[1] Robert Emory, D. D., "History of the Discipline," New York, 1843, p. 108. See also John Emory, "Defence of Our Fathers," Sec. 8.

The Conference that organized the Methodist Episcopal Church evidently had this Anglican Article in mind when it inserted the additional article in the very same relative place, namely, the third from the last, as "Article Twenty-three. Of the Rulers of the United States of America."

In 1786, as passed in 1784, the additional Article read:

"*XXIII. Of the Rulers of the United States of America*

"The Congress, the General Assemblies, the Governors, and the Councils of State, as the Delegates of the People, are the Rulers of the United States of America, according to the division of power made to them by the general act of Confederation, and by the constitutions of their respective States. And the said States ought not to be subject to any foreign jurisdiction," the closing words, "ought not to be subject to any foreign jurisdiction," being an exact reproduction from the English article.

That was the way it passed in 1784, and was printed in "The Sunday Service," in 1786. The declaration that the officials were rulers "as the Delegates of the People," shows that the emphasis was placed upon "the People," as the primary source of authority, and that the "Rulers" possessed only delegated power.

It will also be noted that, at that time, the country still was working under the Articles of Confederation, which had been adopted in 1777, but, the next year after the printing of the second edition of the Service-book, namely, in 1787, the Constitution was formulated, and, by June, 1788, was legally adopted, though the last State, Rhode Island, did not agree until 1790.

The Articles of Confederation having been superseded by the Constitution, the Article of Religion needed amendment, and the General Conference of 1800, on motion of Ezekiel Cooper, of Philadelphia, struck out the words, "general act of Confederation," and inserted the words, "Constitution of the United States," this being made necessary by the recent adoption of the Constitution in place of the Articles of Confederation.

The new article adopted in 1784, inserted in the Service-book in 1786, and amended in 1800, is as follows:

"*XXIII. Of the Rulers of the United States of America*

"The President, the Congress, the General Assemblies, the Governors, and the Councils of State, *as the Delegates of the People*, are the Rulers of the United States of America, according to the division of power made to them by the Constitution of the United States, and by the Constitutions of their respective States. And the said States are a sovereign and independent Nation, and ought not to be subject to any foreign jurisdiction."

There was no President when the Article was passed originally, but now "The President" is inserted in harmony with the Constitution of the Country. The idea of the officials being rulers "*as the Delegates of the People*," was emphasized by the italics, and the idea of independence by the insertion of "are a sovereign and independent Nation," while "ought not to be subject to any foreign jurisdiction," suggests that "*any* foreign jurisdiction" includes civil, military, or religious jurisdiction, and that means absolute independence.

The Articles prepared by Mr. Wesley for the new American organization, with the one inserted by the Methodist Episcopal Church in 1784, were later taken over by the "Wesleyan Methodist Church" in Great Britain, but that Church, which descended from Wesley, changed the Twenty-third Article to read:

"The King's Majesty, with his Parliament, hath the chief power in all the British dominions; unto whom the chief government of all estates in all causes doth appertain; and is not, nor ought to be, subject to any foreign jurisdiction."

The change was made to adapt the Article to the nature of the British government, and it will be noticed that this form associates the Parliament in the government, and does not recognize the Monarch alone.

In like manner, The Methodist Episcopal Church of Canada, and later, The Methodist Church of Canada, likewise, carried over the Articles from "The Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States of America," but, for the American Article Twenty-three, the Canadian Church substituted:

"Article Twenty-three. We believe it is the duty of all Christians to be subject to the powers that be; for we are commanded by the Word of God to respect and obey the Civil Government. We should therefore not only fear God, but honour the King."

This modification also was due to the different governmental conditions.

It is interesting also to perceive that The Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America radically changed the Thirty-seventh Anglican Article, so as to read:

"*XXXVII. Of the Power of Civil Magistrates*

"The Power of the Civil Magistrate extendeth to all men, as well Clergy as Laity, in all things temporal; but hath no authority in things purely spiritual. And we hold it to be the duty of all men who are professors of the Gospel, to pay respectful obedience to the Civil Authority, regularly and legitimately constituted."

This breathes the American spirit. It denies any authority of the Civil government "in things purely spiritual," and makes a nice distinction even between possible civil governments, as it enjoins "respectful obedience to the Civil Authority, regularly and legitimately constituted," but to none other than the "regularly and legitimately constituted."

Returning to the added article, number Twenty-three, it should be observed that the full name of this country is not the "United States," for various governments bear that name as part of their title, as does this country, and this land is not the United States any more than they are the United States. Thus we find the United States of Mexico, the United States of Brazil, and other United States.

The exact legal title is "The United States of America," though colloquially, and where it will not be misunderstood, the title is sometimes abbreviated into "the United States," but this should only be where there can be no doubt as to what is meant, and that it is an abbreviation.

The emphasis is on America rather than on the United States, and the people of the United States of America are Americans, as the inhabitants of the United States of Mexico are Mexicans, and the natives of the United States of Brazil are Brazilians. So, in

this relation, America means the United States of America, and American and Americans mean the citizen or citizens of America, or that part of the Western Hemisphere called the United States of America, and not of any other or every country in North, Central, or South America.

The people of this section, since the European occupation, have always been the Americans. They were so called before the War of the Revolution, and they were known as Americans in the discussions in the British Parliament, and now, when one goes abroad, he does not find "The United States Legation," but the several legations of this country in foreign lands always bear the title of "The American Legation."

The emphasis is on America, but in contradistinction to other countries we should use the full title, "The United States of America," with the strong accent on America, American, and Americans. Because of this other sections take some qualifying word as Central American, or South American, or the title of their own particular country.

The organizing Conference, in 1784, knew the country was America, or the United States of America, and, so, in the added article, gave the full name, "The United States of America."

This new article, the Twenty-third, was made to recognize the new republic called "The United States of America," and to affirm the loyalty of the new Church to the new democracy.

By this added article the new Church also declared that it was related to, belonged to, and was in the United States of America. This was the native habitat, or home country, of the new American Church. It

was to be in, is in, and is to be in, and of, the United States of America, and, so, was, and is "The Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States of America"—of America, and an American Church.

It was so recognized at the beginning and is legally so at the present day. In the early days, in the Church, as well as out of the Church, "America," and "the United States of America" were synonymous expressions, and were used interchangeably, because they meant the same thing.

In the certificate of consecration which Bishop Thomas Coke gave to Bishop Francis Asbury at the Christmas Conference, in 1784, the new denomination is referred to as "The Methodist Episcopal Church in America," and in the very first Minutes of this new organization it is entitled "The Methodist Episcopal Church in America," and is so in the printed minutes bound up with the "Sunday Service" of 1784.

In a short time the full title of the country came more into general use, and though both equivalents continued for a time to be used interchangeably, the full title was considered as more exact and as more fitting and expressive, especially in legal documents and when accuracy was specially desirable.

As the English preachers, and also the Americans, came to better understand the exact legal title of the new republic they gradually adopted a stricter conformity thereto in their ecclesiastical usage.

Wesley, in 1784, on the title page of the new service book said: "The Sunday Service of the Methodists in North America"; and the title page of the American Minutes, influenced probably by the two presiding officers, both British, namely, Coke and Asbury,

had "The Methodist Episcopal Church in America." But in 1786 the title page of the Service Book said: "The Sunday Service of the Methodists in The United States of America," and in 1795, John Dickens, the Book Steward, in the announcement of his publications mentions "the Methodist Societies in the United States of America."

In 1789 Bishop Coke and Bishop Asbury in behalf of the Methodist Episcopal Church, presented an address of congratulation and good wishes to Washington, who had recently been inaugurated the first president of the young republic, and in his response President Washington addressed them as "the Bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States of America." [1]

In 1796, Bishops Coke and Asbury issued an address "To the members of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States," and the General Conference of that year drew up and adopted a "plan of a deed of settlement" which relates that the property is "for the use of the members of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States of America," [2] placing beyond all question the fact that that was the legal title of the denomination, and, in other instances, by order of the General Conference, this full title went into various most important legal documents, showing that it was the legal title of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

Then, for long generations, the Journals of the General Conferences of the Church opened with the declaration that they were the Journals of "The Methodist

[1] Nathan Bangs, D. D.: "History of the Methodist Episcopal Church," New York; Methodist Book Concern, 1839, Vol. I, p. 285.

[2] "General Conference Journal," 1796, p. 13.

Episcopal Church in the United States of America." Thus the Journal of 1812 begins with the statement that "The delegated General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States of America assembled," etc.

So deeds, charters, and other legal documents contain the full title of "The Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States of America."

The Church was intended to be an American Church, of, and in, the United States of America, and not an Australian Church, or a Church of some other land.

It may be said that it has a mission to spread the Gospel, and that it has missions in different parts of the world, but it has no mission to govern the world ecclesiastically, and it never was intended that the outside world should, or would, govern the Church in America.

Just as there has been a tendency to abbreviate the legal title of the country "The United States of America" into the inexact "United States," so, of late, for the sake of colloquial brevity, there has been a tendency to condense "The Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States of America" into the "Methodist Episcopal Church," and even into the "Methodist Church," but none of these are accurate or tell the whole story. There have been, and are, a number of bodies bearing the title of "Methodist Episcopal" or "Methodist," but there is only one "Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States of America," which is the full title as proved by history and by legal documents.

John Wesley, from a distance, said "North America"; the two Britons, Coke and Asbury, said "in

America," meaning to express the title of the new nation, and, later, "the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States;" the General Conference said "The United States of America"; but, as the precise title of the country became better understood, the Church itself used and authorized "in the United States of America."

For the sake of dignity, historical accuracy, and legal exactness, as well as to avoid possible and serious difficulties there should be used the full title "The Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States of America," as one should speak of the country as "The United States of America."

The added Article of Religion, the Twenty-third, was from the spirit of patriotism and loyalty to the American republic called the United States of America, felt by the new Church in the new nation, which Church was "The Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States of America."[1]

[1] The legal title of the Presbyterian Church is "The Presbyterian Church in the United States of America," and of the Protestant Episcopal Church "The Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America."

XIV

THE TWENTY-FIVE ARTICLES

IT will now be helpful to group together, and in order, the Twenty-five Articles of Religion, make a brief survey of their general scope, notice particularly their titles, and perceive at least some of the chief things they teach.

Observe, in the first place, the titles of the Articles of Religion of the Methodist Episcopal Church in their order. They are as follows:

I. Of Faith in the Holy Trinity.
II. Of the Word, or Son of God, who was made very Man.
III. Of the Resurrection of Christ.
IV. Of the Holy Ghost.
V. The Sufficiency of the Holy Scriptures for Salvation.
VI. Of the Old Testament.
VII. Of Original or Birth Sin.
VIII. Of Free Will.
IX. Of the Justification of Man.
X. Of Good Works.
XI. Of Works of Supererogation.
XII. Of Sin after Justification.
XIII. Of the Church.
XIV. Of Purgatory.

XV. Of Speaking in the Congregation in such a Tongue as the People Understand.
XVI. Of the Sacraments.
XVII. Of Baptism.
XVIII. Of the Lord's Supper.
XIX. Of both Kinds.
XX. Of the one Oblation of Christ, finished upon the Cross.
XXI. Of the Marriage of Ministers.
XXII. Of the Rites and Ceremonies of Churches.
XXIII. Of the Rulers of the United States of America.
XXIV Of Christian Men's Goods.
XXV. Of a Christian Man's Oath.

Merely glancing over the titles of these Articles will show the chief points of which they treat. Thus they deal with such fundamental questions, as God, Christ, the Holy Ghost, and the Trinity; they deal with Sin, sinfulness, and depravity; they consider Salvation from sin and sinning, and from the penalty and power of sin, and declare that Christ is the complete Saviour; they discuss Free Will and Justification by faith; they present the Holy Scriptures as the rule of faith and practice and as containing "all things necessary to salvation," and indicate the "canonical books" both of the Old and the New Testaments; and they speak of the Church, the Sacraments, and of other important subjects, all of which shows how very comprehensive the Articles are.

We now insert the Twenty-five Articles in full as they were in 1784:

ARTICLES OF RELIGION

I. Of Faith in the Holy Trinity

There is but one living and true God, everlasting, without body parts, or passions;[1] of infinite power, wisdom, and goodness; the Maker and Preserver of all things, both[2] visible and invisible. And in unity of this Godhead there are three Persons, of one substance, power, and eternity—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.

II. Of the Word, or Son of God, who was made very Man

The Son, who was the Word of the Father, begotten from everlasting of the Father,[3] the very and eternal God, of one substance with the Father, took man's nature in the womb of the blessed Virgin; so that two whole and perfect natures, that is to say, the Godhead and Manhood, were joined together in one Person, never to be divided; whereof is one Christ, very God and very man, who truly suffered, was crucified, dead, aud buried, to reconcile his Father to us, and to be a sacrifice, not only for original guilt, but also for the actual sins of men.

III. Of the Resurrection of Christ

Christ did truly rise again from the dead, and took again his body, with all things appertaining to the perfection of man's nature, wherewith he ascended

[1] In 1786 the words "or passions" were omitted, and it read "without body or parts."

[2] In 1820 "both" was omitted.

[3] "Begotten from everlasting of the Father" was omitted in 1786.

into Heaven, and there sitteth until he return to judge all men at the last day.

IV. Of the Holy Ghost

The Holy Ghost, proceeding from the Father and the Son, is of one Substance, Majesty, and Glory with the Father and the Son, very and eternal God.

V. The Sufficiency of the Holy Scriptures for Salvation

Holy Scripture containeth[1] all things necessary to Salvation; so that whatsoever is not read therein, or[2] may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man, that it should be believed as an Article of the[3] Faith, or be thought requisite or necessary to salvation. In the name of the Holy Scripture we do understand those Canonical Books of the Old and New Testament of whose authority was never any doubt in the Church.

Of[4] the Names of the Canonical Books

Genesis
Exodus
Leviticus
Numbers
Deuteronomy
Joshua
Judges

[1] In 1816 made to read: "The Holy Scriptures contain."
[2] In 1808, or was changed to nor—"nor may be proved."
[3] In 1789, the was omitted so that it read: "Article of Faith."
[4] In 1790 "Of" was taken out and the form began "The Names of the Canonical Books are."

Ruth
The First Book of Samuel
The Second Book of Samuel
The First Book of Kings
The Second Book of Kings
The First Book of Chronicles
The Second Book of Chronicles
The Book of Ezra
The Book of Nehemiah
The Book of Hester
The Book of Job
The Psalms
The Proverbs
Ecclesiastes or the Preacher
Cantica or Song of Solomon
Four Prophets the greater
Twelve Prophets the less.

All the books of the New Testament as they are commonly received, we do receive and account Canonical.

[1]*Of the Old Testament*

The Old Testament is not contrary to the New; for both in the Old and New Testament everlasting life is offered to mankind by Christ, who is the only Mediator between God and Man, being both God and Man. Wherefore they are not to be heard who feign that the old Fathers did look only for transitory promises. Although the law given from God by Moses as touching Ceremonies and Rites doth not bind Christians, nor ought the Civil Precepts thereof of necessity be received in any Commonwealth; yet, notwithstanding,

[1] In the print of 1784, the number is omitted.

no Christian whatsoever is free from the obedience of the commandments which are called Moral.

VII. Of Original or Birth-sin

Original Sin standeth not in the following of Adam (as the Pelagians do vainly talk), but it is the corruption of the nature of every man, that naturally is engendered of the offspring of Adam, whereby man is very far gone from original righteousness, and of his own nature inclined to evil, and that continually.

VIII. Of Free-will

The condition of man after the fall of Adam is such that he cannot turn and prepare himself, by his own natural strength and works to faith, and calling upon God; wherefore we have no power to do good works, pleasant and acceptable to God, without the grace of God by Christ preventing[1] us, that we may have a good-will, and working with us, when we have that good-will.

IX. Of the Justification of Man

We are accounted righteous before God only for the merit of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, by faith, and not for our own works or deservings: wherefore, that we are justified by faith only, is a most wholesome doctrine, and very full of comfort.

X. Of Good Works

Although good Works, which are the fruits of Faith, and follow after Justification, cannot put away our

[1] Old English use. Latin *Nos præveniente.* Going before us, anticipating. So aiding. The old theologians spoke of "preventing grace." Also prevenient.

sins, and endure the severity of God's judgment; yet are they pleasing and acceptable to God in Christ, and spring out of a true and lively Faith, insomuch that by them a lively Faith may be as evidently known as a tree is discerned by its fruit.

XI. Of Works of Supererogation

Voluntary Works—besides, over, and above God's Commandments, which they call[1] Works of Supererogation, cannot be taught without arrogancy and impiety. For by them men do declare, That they do not only render unto God as much as they are bound to do, but that they do more for his sake than of bounden duty is required: whereas Christ saith plainly: When ye have done all that is commanded of you, say, We are unprofitable servants.

XII. Of Sin after Justification

Not every sin willingly committed after Justification is the sin against the Holy Ghost, and unpardonable. Wherefore, the grant of repentance is not to be denied to such as fall into sin, after justification: after we have received the Holy Ghost, we may depart from grace given, and fall into sin, and, by the grace of God, rise again and amend our lives. And therefore they are to be condemned who say they can no more sin as long as they live here, or deny the place of forgiveness to such as truly repent.

XIII. Of the Church

The visible Church of Christ is a Congregation of

[1] In 1816, they call was changed to "are called."

faithful men in the which[1] the pure Word of God is preached, and the Sacraments duly administered according to Christ's Ordinance, in all those things that of necessity are requisite to the same.

XIV Of Purgatory

The Romish Doctrine concerning Purgatory, Pardons,[2] Worshiping and Adoration, as well of Images as of Reliques, and also Invocation of Saints, is a fond thing, vainly invented, and grounded upon no warrant of Scripture, but repugnant to the Word of God.

XV Of Speaking in the Congregation in such a Tongue as the People understand

It is a thing plainly repugnant to the Word of God, and the Custom of the Primitive Church, to have Public Prayer in the Church, or to administer the Sacraments, in a Tongue not understood by the People.

XVI. Of the Sacraments

Sacraments ordained of Christ are not only badges or tokens of Christian Men's Profession; but rather they are certain Signs of Grace, and God's good Will toward us, by the which he doth work invisibly in us, and doth not only quicken, but also strengthen and confirm, our faith in him.

There are two Sacraments ordained of Christ our Lord in the Gospel; that is to say, Baptism and the Supper of the Lord.

Those five commonly called Sacraments, that is to

[1] In 1786 the was stricken out from "in the which" so that it read, "in which."

[2] In 1789, pardons was changed to the singular pardon.

say, Confirmation, Penance, Orders, Matrimony, and extreme Unction, are not to be counted for Sacraments of the Gospel, being such as have grown, partly[1] of the corrupt following of the Apostles, partly are states of life allowed in the Scriptures: but yet have not the like nature of Baptism and the Lord's Supper, because they have not any visible Sign or Ceremony ordained of God.

The sacraments were not ordained of Christ to be gazed upon, or to be carried about; but that we should duly use them. And in such only as worthily receive the same they have a wholesome effect or operation: but they that receive them unworthily, purchase to themselves condemnation, as Saint *Paul* saith.[2]

XVII. Of Baptism

Baptism is not only a sign of profession, and mark of difference, whereby Christians are distinguished from others that are not baptized; but it is also a sign of regeneration, or the new birth. The baptism of young children is to be retained in the Church.

XVIII. Of the Lord's Supper

The Supper of the Lord is not only a sign of the love that Christians ought to have among themselves one to another, but rather is a sacrament of our redemption by Christ's death; Insomuch, that to such as rightly, worthily, and with faith receive the same, the bread which we break is a partaking of the body of Christ; and likewise the cup of blessing is a partaking of the blood of Christ.

[1] In 1786 "grown partly" was changed to read: "partly grown"
[2] In 1816 there was added 1 Cor. xi. 29.

Transubstantiation, or the change of the substance of bread and wine in the supper of the [1] Lord, cannot be proved by holy writ; but is repugnant to the plain words of Scripture, overthroweth the nature of a sacrament, and hath given occasion to many superstitions.

The body of Christ is given, taken, and eaten in the supper, only after a heavenly and spiritual manner. And the mean [2] whereby the body of Christ is received and eaten in the supper, is faith.

The sacrament of the Lord's supper was not by Christ's ordinance reserved, carried about, lifted up, or worshiped.

XIX. Of both Kinds

The cup of the Lord is not to be denied to the lay-people; for both the parts of the Lord's Supper, by Christ's ordinance and commandment, ought to be ministered [3] to all Christians alike.

XX. Of the one Oblation of Christ, finished upon the Cross

The offering of Christ once made, is that perfect redemption, propitiation, and satisfaction for all the sins of the whole world, both original and actual; and there is none other satisfaction for sin but that alone. Wherefore the sacrifice of masses, in the which it is commonly said that the priest doth offer Christ for the quick and the dead, to have remission of pain or guilt, is a blasphemous fable, and dangerous deceit.

[1] In 1796, the was changed to "our Lord."

[2] Mean, changed to means in 1820.

[3] In 1791 ministered was changed to administered, which was not a happy change.

XXI. Of the Marriage of Ministers

The Ministers of Christ are not commanded by God's law either to vow the estate of single life, or to abstain from marriage; therefore it is lawful for them, as for all other Christians, to marry at their own discretion, as they shall judge the same to serve best to godliness.

XXII. Of the Rites and Ceremonies of Churches

It is not necessary that rites and ceremonies should in all places be the same, or exactly alike; for they have been always different, and may be changed according to the diversity of countries, times, and men's manners, so that nothing be ordained against God's Word. Whosoever, through his private judgment, willingly and purposely doth openly break the rites and ceremonies of the Church to which he belongs, which are not repugnant to the Word of God, and are ordained and approved by common authority, ought to be rebuked openly, that others may fear to do the like, as one that offendeth against the common order of the church, and woundeth the consciences of weak brethren.

Every particular church may ordain, change, or abolish rites and ceremonies, so that all things may be done to edification.

XXIII. Of the Rulers of the United States of America

The Congress, the General Assemblies, the Governors, and the Councils of State, *as the Delegates of the People*, are the Rulers of the United States of America, according to the division of power made to them by

the general Act of Confederation, and by the constitutions of their respective States. And the said States ought not to be subject to any foreign jurisdiction.

After the adoption of the Constitution of the United States, the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, in 1800, substituted a revised article, as follows:

XXIII. Of the Rulers of the United States of America

The President, the Congress, the General Assemblies, the Governors, and the Councils of State *as the Delegates of the People*, are the Rulers of the United States of America, according to the division of power made to them by the Constitution of the United States, and by the Constitution of their respective States. And the said States are a sovereign and independent Nation, and ought not to be subject to any foreign jurisdiction.[1]

[1] Robert Emory, D. D.: "History of the Discipline," 1843, p. 110. David Sherman, D. D.: "History of the Revisions of the Discipline," 1890, p. 127. "Discipline," 1916, Twenty-third Article. Also in "Discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church South."

In 1820, in connection with this article, an explanatory foot-note was added, but by what authority does not appear. It is as follows:

As far as it respects civil affairs we believe it the duty of Christians, and especially of all Christian Ministers, to be subject to the supreme authority of the country where they may reside, and to use all laudable means to enjoin obedience to the powers that be; and therefore it is expected that all our Preachers and People, who may be under the British or any other Government, will behave themselves as peaceable and orderly subjects.

At that time, the Methodist Episcopal Church had missionary work in Canada which was under the British government.

XXIV Of Christian Men's Goods

The riches and goods of Christians are not common, as touching the right, title, and possession of the same, as some do falsely boast. Notwithstanding, every man ought, of such things as he possesseth, liberally to give alms to the poor, according to his ability.

XXV Of a Christian Man's Oath

As we confess that vain and rash swearing is forbidden Christian men by our Lord Jesus Christ, and *James* his Apostle; so we judge that the Christian religion doth not prohibit, but that a man may swear when the magistrate requireth, in a cause of faith and charity, so it be done according to the Prophet's teaching, in justice, judgment, and truth.

The Twenty-five Articles of Religion have remained essentially the same since they were adopted by the organizing Conference of 1784.

The Twenty-five Articles were not intended to cover everything which a Christian might believe or ought to believe, or everything which a follower of Wesley, or a member or minister of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States of America might or should believe, but they were intended to keep in view certain fundamental teachings of general Christianity, and certain basal principles of Protestant Christianity.

Wesleyanism had many fixed beliefs, or, as might be said, standardized beliefs, long before these Articles were prepared, and truths in the Articles were contained in the previous and formulated faiths. The

Articles were not intended to destroy the former standards, but were intended to be an added series of declarations, in some instances presenting in a new form what already had been accepted, and in other instances pursuing a new line with a special purpose.

The effort to go down to the very foundations of Christian faith and fact is seen everywhere in these Articles. Thus the opening words of the first article: "There is but one living and true God"; and, so, in the beginning of the second article: "The Son, who was the Word of the Father, the very and eternal God, of one substance with the Father, took man's nature in the womb of the blessed Virgin; so that two whole and perfect natures, that is to say, the Godhead and Manhood, were joined together in one person," etc.

Then in the fifth article, on "The sufficiency of the Holy Scriptures for Salvation," is the statement that, "In the name of the Holy Scriptures we do understand those canonical books of the Old and New Testament of whose authority was never any doubt in the Church. The names of the canonical books are:" and then follow the names of the books as in the Protestant Bible, with the concluding paragraph: "All the books of the New Testament as they are commonly received, we do receive and account canonical."

And so other fundamental points are presented.

The reader who wishes to pursue the study of the Twenty-five Articles of Religion should know of an old and official commentary on these Articles of which comparatively few persons in these days have any knowledge.

The General Conference of 1796, which was the second quadrennial General Conference, "desired the

bishops to draw up Annotations on the Form of Discipline." [1]

This request of the General Conference was complied with by Bishops Coke and Asbury, and their "Explanatory Notes to the Discipline" appeared in the Book of Discipline in 1798. This was really the Discipline of 1796, but of a later edition styled the tenth edition. The "Explanatory Notes" were carried through the body of the Book of Discipline, the "Notes" following the parts to which the "Annotations" severally applied.

The "Notes" took up so much space and added so much to the bulk of the book, that the very next General Conference, that of 1800, took the following action:

"The Form of Discipline shall be printed by itself, and the bishops' explanatory notes by themselves; but in such manner that the notes may be conveniently bound up with the Form of Discipline. And every presiding elder, preacher, or other person, who has charge of the books may send for as many copies of the Form as he pleases, with or without the Notes." [2]

This wording is given in Doctor Robert Emory's "History of the Discipline," and he makes it the eleventh item in the report on the "Book Business," adopted on the last day of the session of 1800, but the Journal of that General Conference states it was adopted earlier that day as a separate resolution, as

[1] Rev. Robert Emory, D. D.: "History of the Discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church," New York: Methodist Book Concern, 1843, p. 85.

[2] "General Conference Journal," 1800, pp. 43, 44. Robert Emory, D. D.: "History of the Discipline," New York, 1843, p. 85 and p. 260.

follows: "Resolved, That the Form of Discipline shall be printed by itself, and the notes likewise printed distinctly out, with such references that they may be bound with the form, and that the preachers shall have liberty to order as many as they please, with the notes or without them."[1]

This language is quaint, but it and the phrasing quoted by Doctor Robert Emory, mean the same thing, while the side-heading in the printed Journal has: "Discipline to be printed without notes," thus showing very plainly that the intention in each was identical, and both forms could have been prepared, the one in the formal report, and the other in the separate resolution.

In these "Notes" were annotations on each and every one of the Articles of Religion. These were the first official comments on the Articles of Religion, and no other General Conference has ever requested any new annotations on "The Twenty-five Articles."

The collected "Notes" are reprinted in Doctor Robert Emory's "History of the Discipline,"[2] and reprinted in Doctor David Sherman's "History of the Revisions of the Discipline,"[3] but neither volume contains the annotations on the Articles of Religion by Bishop Coke and Bishop Asbury. For these comments on the Twenty-five Articles the student must now go back to the Book of Discipline for 1798.

[1] "General Conference Journal," 1800, pp. 43, 44.

[2] Appendix, pp. 281–339, editions of 1843, 1851.

[3] New York, 1890, pp. 401–459.

XV

RELATED FORMULARIES

CERTAIN of the facts which have been ascertained should now be recalled and so grouped together as to clearly show their relation to each other.

In them there is an order of time for all were not of the same date or the same period. Some were preliminary to others, some were supplementary, while all blended sooner or later, and moved on together, and in the end made a complete and homogeneous system of theology.

First, were the preached doctrines, spoken and heard; second, the same doctrines conversed about, and crystallized in the thought of the people; and, third, the written, printed, and circulated presentations of the doctrine in permanent form, growing in its scope according to the need and the opportunity.

When we reach this third stage, which was approached quite rapidly, certain presentations, or formulations appeared in a logical and natural order. First, came the General Rules which gave, not only an initial outline of polity, but also, a scheme of practical and religious living based on religious truth. Then came the doctrinal utterances in the Minutes of the Conferences, first of the British and later of the American. Then came the doctrinal teachings in Wesley's first fifty-two

collected sermons, and still later, John Wesley's "Notes on the New Testament." Here were found the early standards of doctrine, and, particularly, in Wesley's Sermons and in his Notes.

All these existed before Wesleyanism formally began on the Atlantic Coast of North America.

Now we have already traced certain Wesleyan doctrines, and standards of doctrine from Great Britain to the British Colonies in North America, doctrines and standards which were the same as those held and formally acknowledged by the Wesleyans in England and other parts of the monarchy.

Coming to America they were recognized, and even formally adopted by vote, by early American Methodism in Colonial times, in the revolutionary period, and, after the recognition of the independence of the United States of America, and that was formally done in the very year, and only a few months before the American Methodists were organized into the Methodist Episcopal Church.

These doctrinal standards of British Methodism, therefore, were carried to, and recognized in America, and became the standards of doctrine in the American Wesleyan organization, and, later, when the preachers and people who held them were organized into the Methodist Episcopal Church, the doctrines were carried on and continued with them and in it.

This should be observed most carefully. The fact is to be noted, and never lost sight of, that those who recognized the Wesleyan Standards, in the month of May, 1784, were the very same persons who, in December of the same year, reorganized themselves into the ecclesiastical body known as the Methodist Episcopal

Church. The natural presumption is that the same people, in the same year, with an interval of only a few months, as a matter of course, continued to hold and preach the same doctrines, and carried with them the same doctrinal standards. The only thing that could overturn this presumption would be positive proof that they had deliberately turned against their doctrines and standards which they had held throughout the years and up to that moment, but there is absolutely no evidence that they discarded these doctrines when they formed themselves into this new Church.

Further, it is to be remembered, that the Methodist Episcopal Church, in 1784, was not an entirely new creation, but, rather, an evolution from an organism that had a previous existence in America, and, before that, an existence in England, which ran back to 1739, and of that previous organism there had been no dissolution.

Still further, there were various vital things that were carried through the several stages of the continuing organic life, and the process was somewhat similar to that seen in the Colonies that passed over into the United States of America.

In this way various features, including those which were organic and vital, were carried over into the Church organization of 1784, and that without requiring reënactment. It is well known that various usages were thus carried over, and if ceremonial and economical usages went over in this way without any formal action, there were much stronger reasons for continuing their system of doctrines in the same way.

As a matter of fact most, if not all, of the old things continued, and only a very few new things were added

to make the complete Church, one of the new things added being the Articles of Religion. They were new chiefly as a formally designated standard, and they were accepted as such.

The following facts, therefore, are plain:

First, that the American Methodists carried with them into the new Church organization their old doctrines and their old doctrinal standards which were the Wesleyan Standards and doctrines as they existed in 1784.

Second, that, as a part of the new organization, they adopted the Twenty-four Articles of Religion prepared by the Reverend John Wesley, and also an additional article prepared by the organizing Conference, so that the new Church had at the beginning Twenty-five Articles of Religion.

Third, that the organizing Conference accepted or adopted "The Sunday Service. With other Occasional Services," which had been prepared for the new organization by John Wesley, the then ecclesiastical head of Wesleyan Methodism.

Fourth, that the organizing Conference also adopted formularies and services in addition to those previously held by those who made the new Church, and that these additions contained doctrinal declarations and expressions, as for example the forms and services in the new book of common prayer called "The Sunday Service. With other Occasional Services," the first new authoritative book of the Methodist Episcopal Church, for that book contained much more than prayers and an order of service.

These new standards together with the old standards made the doctrinal standards of the new Church.

It is plain that in all Mr. Wesley did in preparation for the reorganization of his people in the new republic, he had had no purpose or thought that the preachers or the people would give up their old doctrines, or their old doctrinal standards which he himself had constructed and perfected for them.

Nothing of the sort did he ever intimate or intend, and there was nothing in the work of reorganizing that necessitated such a change of view or form on the part of himself or his American followers.

On the other hand the organizing Conference did not do away with the old standards, and, as the former doctrines already existed, and were duly recognized, it was not necessary to reënact them.

They were already believed and formally recognized, and they would continue by right of inheritance, or long usage, as in the case of the common law brought over from England to America, used in the Colonies, and then in the United States of America, without new statute law or reënactment. If there was no other reason the common law principle would hold, and the old standards of doctrine would come over into the reorganization by inheritance, long-continued usage, or common consent, unless there was formal action or deliberate declaration to the contrary, which there was not in any sense or any form. Further, we know that preachers and people went on preaching and believing the old doctrines in the old way.

Some one may ask whether the adoption of the Articles of Religion could automatically do away with the doctrines and the doctrinal standards that existed among the American Methodists before they were organized into a regular Church, or did the former

doctrines continue with the Articles as an addition to the former standards?

The older standards and the Articles were different formularies and covered different grounds, and the adoption of the one would not nullify the other. In other words, the former standards being in existence, the adoption of the Articles would not do away with the former doctrines, unless the Articles contradicted and annulled them, or there was a formal action stating that their adoption rescinded, displaced, or supplanted the older doctrinal forms, which as a matter of fact the Articles in themselves did not, and there was no clause or act to that effect.

The Articles did not annul anything in the old standards and there was no act of abrogation. Indeed much, or all, in the Articles was already embraced in the preëxisting, and continuing standards, and, particularly, in Mr. Wesley's recognized writings, only that in the Articles these doctrines were stated concisely as in the formula of an authoritative declaration or decision.

Just as English Methodism came over with, and to, the American Methodists, so American Methodism was carried over into the new Church organization, excepting where by some specific action a new and modifying feature was introduced, or a positive change was made. So with the old doctrinal system, it remained the same, or stood as before, unless modified or otherwise affected by formal action or other specific change.

Evidently many things were carried over into the new Church organization without any new or formal vote. Thus the General Rules, a most important and fundamental document, went into the reorganization

without any formal reënactment. Like many other things the Rules went on as a matter of course. So it is an historical fact that the old doctrines went on and were preached and believed as before, and deeds for church property made after 1784 recited the doctrinal requirements as did the earlier deeds. This was the case, for example, in the deed of the Ebenezer Church of Philadelphia, which church was built in 1790, and the deed was drawn at that time.

One thing is perfectly clear, and that is, that the new Articles of Religion adopted at the organization were standards of doctrine in and for the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States of America, no matter how many other standards there might be.

They were distinct and carefully formulated statements, declarations, and definitions of religious doctrines, deliberately prepared for, and adopted by, the new Church at its organization to be symbols of belief, and they have always remained standards of doctrine, and are just as obligatory now as they have been at any time since their adoption in December, 1784.

XVI

STATUTORY DEFENSE OF THE DOCTRINAL STANDARDS

IT is evident that the Articles of Religion prepared by John Wesley for the new American Church, and agreed to by the organizing Conference of December, 1784, thus became doctrinal standards of this newly organized ecclesiasticism, the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States of America.

Where Wesley got his Articles, and why and how he revised and used the Thirty-nine Anglican Articles, and gave the new American Church Twenty-four, is most interesting history, but these things do not form the present question, and are not absolutely necessary for its consideration.

The important fact is that Wesley prepared Twenty-four Articles of Religion for the proposed organization, and that the organizing Conference accepted them, and then framed and adopted another article, thus making Twenty-five Articles of Religion, which the Church possessed at its beginning, and their very nature and the circumstances of their creation and adoption showed they were to be, and that they were, a formulation of doctrines which was a doctrinal standard.

The new Articles of Religion were doctrinal expressions by and for the new Church, and, therefore, were to be received and respected by those who chose to be in the Church.

They were no longer the utterance of a mere indi-

vidual, no matter how distinguished he might be, but the official declaration of the Church, voiced by the Conference that possessed the sovereign power.

The Articles, therefore, were as obligatory, to say the least, as any Disciplinary enactment, or any measure of government, adopted, or agreed to, by the sovereign body that organized the Church in 1784 and determined its basal organic law, and, by its action, these articles became part of the Constitution of the Church, and, so, obligatory upon all within the body.

It may be asked, whether there is any evidence that the Articles of Religion were regarded as standards of doctrine, and obligatory upon the Church, other than the fact that Wesley prepared them for reorganized Methodism in America, and that they were adopted by the Methodist Episcopal Church at its organization?

These facts are sufficient to settle the authority of the Articles, but nevertheless we should allow the question: Are there any other facts that may be cited in proof of their authority?

In answer it will be seen that there are other various, and conclusive, evidences, a few of which will now be presented.

In the first place, it should be known that they had become part of the obligatory expressions and enactments of the Church, and that that fact was speedily asserted in the legal statutes of the denomination.

This soon became necessary, for in all organizations there are persons who do not willingly yield to law, but who wish to vary their conduct according to their own mood or impulse, rather than according to constitutional agreements or statute law. To this, the Church is no exception, and both Church and State find

it necessary to buttress even the organic law by further enactments, and also to attach penalties, in order to ensure the observance of legal regulations.

So, it would seem, that, within eight years after the organization of the new Church, some preachers were out of harmony with one or more of the Articles, or there was a fear that they might be.

In view of the danger, or possible danger, the Church quickly flew to the defense of the new Articles of Religion, thus showing its regard for their importance, and, one might say, the sacredness, of these formulations of doctrine.

A few years after the organization of the Church, therefore, it was deemed wise, and also necessary for the protection of the Articles, to enact a specific law based upon the fact, and recognition, of the Articles of Religion as standards of doctrine that must be respected.

This law was made in 1792, and was against holding and teaching doctrines contrary to these Articles of Religion. According to this law, to hold and teach doctrines contrary to the Articles was an actionable and punishable offense, which clearly shows that the Articles of Religion were then standards of doctrine, as binding as the statute and organic law of the Church, and that those who spoke against the Articles, or any one of them, was regarded as a law-breaker who could be arraigned, tried, and punished, for his act.

In the Book of Discipline of 1792 the following question was inserted:

"*Ques.* 3. What shall be done with those Ministers or Preachers who hold and preach doctrines which are contrary to our Articles of Religion?"

The process prescribed shows how seriously the Church regarded the matter. Thus the answer to Question 4 began: "Let the same process be observed as in cases of gross immorality," as though it was regarded as an immorality and was to be treated as such.

The full answer to the old question in 1792 was:

"*Ans.* Let the same process be observed as in cases of gross immorality: but if the minister or preacher so offending do solemnly engage neither to preach nor defend such erroneous doctrines in public or in private, he shall be borne with, till his case be laid before the next yearly Conference, which shall determine the matter.

"Provided, nevertheless, that in the above-mentioned cases of trial and conviction, an appeal to the ensuing general Conference shall be allowed." [1]

So seriously was such conduct on the part of a minister or preacher regarded that the accused party could be arraigned, tried, and, if found guilty, could be suspended, the finding being subject to review by the Annual Conference, which could expel him, from which finding, however, he might appeal to the General Conference, and this applied not only to preaching, but also to defending, doctrines contrary to the Articles, and to doing so, not only in public, but also in private.

There can be, therefore, no question as to the authority of these Articles of Religion as expressions and expositions of the credal views of the new Church, and as standards of doctrine in the Methodist Episcopal Church.

[1] "Discipline of 1792," Sec. XIX, Ques. 3, p. 39. Bishop Thomas B. Neely: "Journal of General Conference of 1792"; Cincinnati and New York, Methodist Book Concern, 1899, pp. 25, 26.

In various other ways, also, they were so recognized in, and by, the Church.

This has always been the view of the Church, and the same law, made in 1792, only made more drastic, has continued to the present time, and still remains the law of the denomination.

These facts prove that the Articles of Religion formed, and now form, a standard of doctrine, and that the Methodist Episcopal Church, obeying its own law, cannot tolerate any teaching contrary thereto, either in public or in private.

The law of 1792 shows that the Articles were standards of doctrine, and that the Church prohibited any of its ministers or preachers from holding and preaching anything contrary thereto, and subsequent enactments have maintained the same attitude.

In 1816, in this law, the word "preach" was changed to "disseminate publicly or privately"—"doctrines which are contrary to our Articles of Religion," thus making the prohibition more drastic, covering private remarks as well as public utterances, and every medium, whether by voice, pen, or print, or by other symbol.[1]

In 1872, the interrogatory form was changed, so that the question and answer disappeared, and the direct statement took its place, as follows:

"When a Minister or Preacher holds and disseminates, publicly or privately, doctrines which are contrary to our Articles of Religion," etc.[2]

In 1880, the words "holds and" were stricken out, probably because they were deemed unnecessary, as they had no practical or legal force, unless there was

[1] "Discipline of 1816," Sec. VIII, Ques. 3, p. 72.

[2] "Discipline of 1872," Part III, Chap. I, Sec. II, p. 129.

also the actual dissemination, as the law read: "holds and disseminates," so that with the words "holds and" out, it then read: "When a Minister or Preacher disseminates," etc.

It will be seen that there is no way of arraigning a man for having or holding views that he does not utter, and no way of proving that he holds such views when he never expresses them. So the words "holds and" went out.

The same year, 1880, there were inserted the words: "or established Standards of Doctrine," making the law read: "When a Minister or Preacher disseminates, publicly or privately, doctrines which are contrary to our Articles of Religion or established Standards of Doctrine," etc.[1] This broadened the scope of the law.

The law now reads: "If a member of an Annual Conference be charged with disseminating, publicly or privately, doctrines which are contrary to our Articles of Religion, or our other existing and established standards of doctrine, the same procedure shall be observed," etc.[2]

This was the amended form passed by the General Conference of 1912.

The present form of the law in regard to a Local Preacher is: "If a Local Preacher disseminate, publicly or privately, doctrines which are contrary to our Articles of Religion, or our other present existing and established standards of doctrine, the same procedure shall be observed as is prescribed in ¶ ¶ 271, 272."[3]

[1] "Book of Discipline," Meth. Epis., 1880, Part III, Chap. I, ¶ 213, p. 140.

[2] Meth. Epis., "Discipline," 1916, ¶ 254, p. 185.

[3] *Ibid.*, ¶ 274, p. 193.

These laws coming down without a break from the very early days of the Church show a very strong and persistent determination to protect its doctrinal standards, and they show that the minister or preacher is not permitted to teach anything contrary to these standards of doctrine.

He cannot teach publicly or utter privately what he pleases on the matter of doctrine unless he pleases to speak in harmony with the Articles of Religion and all the standards of the Church. Both in the pulpit and in conversation, and in every form of utterance the law expects him to respect and to conform to these standards.

He must conform thereto or be liable to legal action because of his own departure from the doctrines of the Church, and because of his pervertive influence upon others.

More than that, every preacher and every member has voluntarily vowed conformity. For example, all have been asked and have answered in the affirmative the question: "Do you believe in the doctrines of the Holy Scriptures as set forth in the Articles of Religion of the Methodist Episcopal Church?" as they have also promised to obey all its laws.

Yet some have asserted that the Articles of Religion were not binding but merely "indicative" or "indicatory," but they do not indicate in what sense they are "indicative" or of what they are "indicatory." Perhaps they mean that they are suggestive, though no clear meaning is given in the use of the words.

To say that the Articles are merely "indicatory" is to use a word in a sense unknown to the law and the history of the Church, to give a use which is unsup-

ported by the law and the history, and which, in this inquiry and discussion, is meaningless.

If the words are intended to mean anything it is to assert that the Articles are not binding, but to say they are not obligatory, or binding, is to display ignorance of the law of the Church and of its history. The Articles were not merely indicatory but declaratory and obligatory. They indicate the truth, and declare what those in the Church should believe and must respect.

The law of 1792 shows that the Church, from the very beginning, knew they were binding, and determined to protect them by punishing those who expressed views in opposition to, or not in harmony with, the Twenty-five Articles.

The law of 1792 meant, and said, that the Articles were obligatory and must be obeyed, and that law has continued ever since, and exists at the present time, and even in stronger terms.

Because they are obligatory the statute law has protected them quite from the beginning.

XVII

CONSTITUTIONAL PROTECTION OF THE STANDARDS

WE have seen how the power of the statute law was invoked, soon after the organization of the Methodist Episcopal Church, to defend the Articles of Religion by demonstrating that they were obligatory, and by indicating severe penalty to be imposed upon persons found guilty of speaking in public or in private against the said articles, or their teachings.

Some years later the Church, through its general General Conference, which then was the Sovereign Power, still further emphasized the obligatory nature of the Articles of Religion, and its determination to throw around them every possible safeguard, by putting them squarely under the protection of the new Constitution of the Church, and, indeed, by recognizing as, or making, them a part of its formal and written Constitution, as they had been in the organic law from the beginning.

Here it should be remarked that The Methodist Episcopal Church always had a Constitution of some sort. Thus the title of the Minutes, published in 1786, reads:

"The General Minutes of the Conferences of the Methodist Episcopal Church in America, forming the Constitution of the said Church."

Later came the written Constitution, somewhat after

the form of the Constitution of the United States of America, with paragraphs and sub-paragraphs, or articles and sections, arranged in a somewhat logical and regular order.

In 1808, in making the first formally written constitution of the Church, for the purpose of creating a new kind of General Conference, namely, a delegated General Conference, the then sovereign body of the Church which was the general General Conference containing the body of the ministry, or eldership, in the Annual Conferences, took further measures to protect the Articles of Religion, particularly from any attempted exertion of power in relation to them on the part of the delegated General Conference, which was very different from the then existing General Conference which was composed of the ministry generally.

By a provision in this first specifically written Constitution of the Methodist Episcopal Church, the new and delegated General Conference, made up of selected persons from the Annual Conferences, though it was to have limited lawmaking powers, was prohibited from annulling, abrogating, destroying, or changing in any particular, the Articles of Religion.

This was done by putting into the Constitution a specific limitation on the powers of the delegated General Conference, and, to show its relative and great importance, it was made the very first restriction.[1]

On this specific matter for protecting the Articles of Religion against changes therein by the new kind of

[1] "General Conference Journal," 1808, p. 89. "Book of Discipline," 1808, Chap. I, Sec. III, Ques. 2, pp. 14–16. Thomas B. Neely, D. D: "History of the Governing Conference in Methodism"; New York, Methodist Book Concern, 1892, pp. 338–388.

General Conference, which was to be a proportionately selected body, the prohibition read: "The General Conference shall not revoke, alter, nor change our Articles of Religion."

This was put into the Constitution of 1808, the first formally written Constitution of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and there it has stood continuously from that time down to the present day, and is going on into the future, for the new, or amended, Constitution of 1900 continued bodily, and in every detail this first restriction, so that it remains in force as intended in the Constitution of 1808, putting a positive limitation on the power of the delegated, or representative, General Conference.[1]

The general General Conferences prior to the making of the Constitution of 1808 were ecclesiastically all-powerful, because they were made up of the assembled body of the ministry generally which possessed the sovereign power of the Church, but the body of the ministry in the Annual Conferences never passed all its sovereign power over to the delegated General Conference which the ministry or eldership had created.

The new kind of General Conference, therefore, was not to be an all-powerful body, but a body with limited powers, and so it has always remained, and, under the first limitation, the General Conference made up of delegates could not modify the Articles of Religion, but must preserve them as they were in 1808, and had been from the organization of the Church.

The General Conference, by the force of this restriction, could not, and cannot, revoke, alter, or change the Articles of Religion.

[1] Meth. Epis., "Discipline," 1916, Art. X, Sec. I, p. 44.

At first sight these words may seem to be, or might be regarded as, repetitions, or tautological, but there are distinctions in the meaning of the words, and the plain intention in their use is to provide for every possibility and give the Articles perfect protection.

The General Conference cannot revoke, or call back, any article, or anything in any article. It cannot alter any article in any way, or any degree, in whole or in part. Then, to cover every possible thing, the broad and generic word "change" is used, so that the General Conference cannot modify the Articles of Religion in any possible way, directly or indirectly. It cannot change by abrogating, or rescinding; it cannot change by eliminating or inserting; it cannot change by modifying in any way the meaning or the wording; it cannot modify by shifting sentences or phrases, even though every word and every letter were preserved; it cannot take out old articles and put in new ones, as it cannot add any articles; and it cannot change the titles, number, and order of the Articles. In other words, The General Conference cannot amend the Articles of Religion in any way, or in any degree. That is to say, the General Conference must not touch the Articles of Religion, but must let them stand unchanged. The General Conference, of itself, must let them stand precisely as they were when the first restrictive rule was made, which is to say, that the General Conference cannot make them differ in any particular from what they were in 1808, which means, what they were at the beginning of the denomination.

It follows, therefore, that the General Conference could not authorize, or permit, any body or individual, directly or indirectly, or in any way, to change the

Articles or to modify their meaning, and it likewise follows that the General Conference could not, though letting the Articles of Religion stand as they were in 1808, create, or cause, or permit, to be drawn up, any other set of Articles of Religion, or any contrary standard. In short, the General Conference, of itself, cannot make or change the standard doctrines of the Church, and it cannot permit, authorize, or accept, any such action by others.

This restriction in the Constitution not only protected the Articles of Religion by putting them beyond the power even of the General Conference, but placed, or recognized, these Articles as in the Constitution itself, and as part of the organic law of the Church.

It showed also, beyond all question, that the Articles of Religion formed a standard, or one of the standards, of doctrine in the Methodist Episcopal Church, so that, without doubt, these Articles of Religion were not only doctrinal expressions, but were doctrinal standards of an obligatory nature, and standards of religious teaching with which all other doctrinal writings or utterances of individuals or others within the Church were to be compared and tested, as weights and measures were to stand the test of comparison with the standard weights and measures of the civil government, and all that could not stand the test of harmony or conformity with the standards were to be disapproved and rejected.

In this particular examination we have considered only the first part of the First Restrictive Rule, namely, the portion that prohibits the General Conference from making any change whatsoever in the Articles of Religion, but the First Restrictive Rule contains more than that.

The entire restriction reads as follows: "The General Conference shall not revoke, alter, nor change our Articles of Religion, nor establish any new standards or rules of doctrine contrary to our present existing and established standards of doctrine." [1]

So now we should analyze and study the entire restriction, and especially the second part against establishing "any new standards or rules of doctrine contrary to our present existing and established standards of doctrine," but, before proceeding further, it should be noted that the Constitution of the Church declares that the Church had doctrines and "standards of doctrine," and that they were "established," and then "existing," and, whatever they were then, they are to-day.

The careful student will perceive, as indicated, that there are two parts in the first restrictive rule, for, on the matter of doctrines, the first restrictive rule limits the General Conference in at least two ways, or, in other words, puts on that body two limitations instead of a single one.

First, as to the Articles, the General Conference is absolutely restricted. The General Conference cannot make any change whatsoever in the Articles of Religion.

The second part is to the effect that the General Conference shall not make, or set up, any new standards contrary to the then existing standards of doctrine, which, plainly, would at least prohibit any formulation contrary to the Articles of Religion, and raised the question as to whether there are other standards in addition to the Articles. The exact language of the

[1] "Discipline," 1916, ¶ 46, § I, Art. X, § I, p. 44.

second part is: "nor establish any new standards or rules of doctrine contrary to our present existing and established standards of doctrine." [1]

This double restriction, therefore, means, first, that the General Conference cannot, in any way, modify the Articles of Religion.

It means, second, that the General Conference cannot leave the Articles of Religion untouched, or pass them by, and then go on and formulate, or establish, or authorize to be formulated, or established, or permit to be formulated or established, "any new standards or rules of doctrine contrary to" the Articles of Religion.

Third, it means that the General Conference cannot leave the Articles of Religion intact, and then pass on and "establish any new standards or rules of doctrine contrary to" "the standards of doctrine" "existing" in the Church in 1808, when the written Constitution of the Church was adopted. Or, repeating that section of the restriction: "The General Conference shall not" "establish any new standards or rules of doctrine contrary to our present existing and established standards of doctrine." Because the General Conference leaves the Articles of Religion unchanged does not authorize it to make these other new standards.

The word "present"—"present" standards—plainly means at the time the Constitution was adopted, namely, at the time of the session of the general General Conference in 1808.

The phrase, "Present existing and established standards," means standards that had been duly established by legal and constitutional enactment, or in some other

[1] Const. Art. X, ¿ I. "Discipline," 1916, ¶ 46, ¿ I, p. 44.

equivalent way, if there was any such other way, and which were existing at that time, or, in other words, if they once had been constitutionally established, had not been abrogated, but existed legally, and were legally in force in that "present," namely, when the Constitution was adopted in 1808, that is to say, the doctrines that were then recognized.

That is what "present existing and established standards of doctrine" meant when the restriction was placed in the Constitution of 1808, and the exact language continues to the present time.

So it may be said that the restriction covers, first, the established standards of doctrine in 1808; and, secondly, "existing and established standards of doctrine" which have been constructed and adopted constitutionally, in harmony with the Constitution of the Church and the Articles of Religion, and the then "present existing and established standards of doctrine" of 1808, and which have been constitutionally constructed since that time, and which now thus legally exist, if there be any such of this latter class. But no constitutional changes have been made in the doctrinal standards since 1808.

The changing of the Articles of Religion and the then "existing and established standards of doctrine" was put beyond the power of the delegated General Conference, showing that the Church had doctrinal standards, that they were to be respected by the Church, and so were safeguarded by constitutional restrictions, and to-day the same standards exist and the same Constitution continues to protect the same standards of doctrine.

XVIII

EXISTING AND ESTABLISHED STANDARDS

AS has been seen, the first constitutional limitation on the delegated General Conference was a positive command against any interference by the said General Conference with the Articles of Religion.

The Articles belonged to the whole Church, and this agency called the General Conference, created, empowered, and limited by the Sovereign power of the Church, was to be without power in and of itself to change the Church's Articles of Religion.

The General Conference might, and ought, to protect the Articles of Religion, for that was its manifest duty, but to "revoke, alter, or change" the Articles, or any one of them, in any particular, or to any extent, was absolutely beyond the power of this delegated Conference, a body which had no power except as it was distinctly empowered by an authority greater than itself. In this matter, it was not empowered, but the power was specifically withheld.

The Church was not to take its Articles of Religion, or other doctrinal standards from the delegated General Conference, but the General Conference was to take them from the Church. In other words the delegated General Conference itself was not to be the doctrine-making body of the Church.

The Church had made the Articles of Religion when the old kind of General Conference which possessed

the Sovereign power existed, but, when it created the less powerful delegated General Conference which had only delegated power, the Church refused to vest the doctrine-making power in the new kind of General Conference, and, so, the Articles of Religion have been protected even from the General Conferences since 1808.

Then the delegated General Conference was prohibited from establishing "any new standards or rules of doctrine contrary to our present existing and established standards of doctrine." What were they? What were these standards in 1808?

The General Conference could not set up anything contrary to the Articles of Religion, and, if these Articles were the only standards of doctrine, there was nothing more to consider. But does the expression in the second part of the restriction, about "present existing and established standards," mean that there were standards *other* than the Articles?

The word other is not used in the restriction. It does not say other standards, or other standards than the Articles, so some might be inclined to think that the "present existing and established standards" meant the Articles of Religion alone, unless facts would show that there were standards other than the Articles.

It is to be noticed, however, that the Articles are dealt with in the first part of the restriction, and the second part appears to refer to something else, and its form shows that it is comprehensive and inclusive of a number of things, for it employs the plural "standards."

The second part of the prohibition was in addition to, and broader than the first part. That referred to the Articles but this extends farther. The Conference could not change the Articles, but, more than that, it

could not, and cannot, set up any new standard contrary to the "established standards" then existing.

That would apply to the Articles but it would imply that there were standards beyond the Twenty-five Articles of Religion. The phrasing of the second part of the restriction suggests something more inclusive than the first part. In the first part the Articles stand out alone as one document, while in the second part the Articles are not specified at all, but the comprehensive expression, "our present existing and established standards of doctrine" is used. In the first part appear the Articles of Religion, and, in the second part, the plural "standards" are referred to as though there were numbers of well-known documents.

It is held that the natural interpretation is that, besides the Articles, there were additional "established standards." Can such standards be discovered?

The Constitution of 1808 declared there were "present existing and established standards of doctrine." There were, then, in 1808, "standards of doctrine" that were known as "our present existing and established standards of doctrine." They were standards which had been "established," and established in some recognized or accepted way, by formal vote, by long recognized common consent, or, it might be, by inheritance, say as the common law of England was carried over into the English Colonies, and then up into the United States of America, which nation was made out of those Colonies. Further, they were "present existing," existing at that present time, which is to say, when the Constitution of the Church was adopted in 1808. Not only had these standards been established, but they were "existing," and in force, at that "present" time.

In the first place there were the standards of doctrine which Wesley's followers had brought from England, and which were duly recognized by the Early American Conferences, at various times, including the very year the American Wesleyans were organized into the Methodist Episcopal Church.

These, we recall, were the first Fifty-two Sermons of Wesley, and the Reverend John Wesley's "Notes on the New Testament," to which may be added, The General Rules and the doctrinal parts of the British and American Conference Minutes of those early days.

Now we should ask, Were there any other doctrinal formulations which were "present existing and established," when the Constitution was made in 1808?

Here we must consider the various formularies adopted at the organization of the Church in 1784, and chief, and most comprehensive, of the organizing documents, so to speak, was Wesley's Service Book, commonly called "The Sunday Service," though it contained very much more than the service forms for the Sabbath day.

There were, indeed, various other formulations in "The Sunday Service of the Methodists in North America. With other Occasional Services," which the Reverend John Wesley prepared and published in Bristol, England, in 1784.

This, it will be remembered, was prepared in view of the reorganization of American Methodism, and was accepted by the Methodist Episcopal Church, in the organizing Conference, in the last week of December, 1784.

Richard Whatcoat, one of Wesley's elders, wrote: "We agreed to form a Methodist Episcopal Church, *in*

which the liturgy (as presented by the Reverend John Wesley) *should be read*, and the sacraments be administered,"[1] and Whatcoat italicizes the words "*in which the liturgy should be read*," by all of which he shows the importance he attached to the adoption of the "Sunday Service" book.

So the Minutes of the organizing Conference refer to "our Liturgy," as do the Minutes for 1786, and the Minutes of 1787 mention "our Prayer-book," as do those of 1788 and 1789, and the "Sunday Service," of 1786, carried on its title page, "The Sunday Service of the Methodists in the United States of America. With other Occasional Services," and, in the General Minutes, printed with this service book, it is called "our Liturgy."

This Service Book abounds in expressions of doctrine. They were intended to be, and they were, doctrinal expressions, and these, accepted by the organizing Conference of the Church, went into the very organic structure of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States of America. So this service book became part of the organism, and, therefore, must have become one of the standards of the denomination. In it were the Articles of Religion which, of course, were standards of doctrine, while many other parts of the Service Book contained many formulations in which were definite doctrinal statements, which were doctrinal beliefs of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

[1] Whatcoat's Mems., p. 21. Thomas B. Neely, D. D.: "The Evolution of Episcopacy and Organic Methodism," New York, Methodist Book Concern, 1888, pp. 232, 285–292. Thomas B. Neely, LL. D.: "A History of the Origin and Development of the Governing Conference in Methodism," New York, 1892, pp. 230–266.

In both the Morning and the Evening Prayer appeared the Apostles' Creed which the Church and Congregation declared to be the belief of the participants and that by the authority of the Church.

With the rubric, "Then shall be said the Apostles' Creed by the Minister and the People, standing," the Service had the Creed:

"I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of Heaven and Earth:

"And in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord; Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost; Born of the Virgin Mary; Suffered under Pontius Pilate; Was crucified, dead, and buried, He descended into hell: The third day he rose again from the dead: He ascended into Heaven, And sitteth on the right hand of God, the Father Almighty; From thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

"I believe in the Holy Ghost; The Holy Catholick Church; The Communion of Saints; The Forgiveness of Sins; The Resurrection of the Body, And the Life everlasting. Amen."

That Creed was pronounced during the Morning Prayer, and also in the progress of the Evening Prayer, and was one of the standards of doctrine in the Methodist Episcopal Church, and no law has ever changed its rank or diminished its authority in the Church, and it was only in this service book that the Apostles' Creed was found.

Then there were the Sacramental Services, of Baptism and the Lord's Supper, which were full of doctrinal presentations and allusions.

In the forms for Baptism there was much doctrinal teaching, and, in the form for the Baptism of those of

Riper Years, among other things, is again found, for example, the Apostles' Creed, which is admitted to be one of the standards of doctrine.

It must be held that all these were formulations of doctrine, and plainly so where doctrines were expressed, and that, in 1808, they were "present existing and established standards of doctrine." Anything, indeed, in the nature of doctrinal formulation, existing from the beginning and to 1808, was standard, and not to be destroyed but to be protected.

Then "The Sunday Service of the Methodists in North America. With other Occasional Services," the book which Wesley prepared, and which the Methodist Episcopal Church, at its organization, put into its very organic life, likewise contained "The Form for the Burial of the Dead," which form abounded in doctrinal teachings as to life, death, the resurrection through our Lord Jesus Christ, the final judgment, and the life everlasting.

These also are to be regarded as expressions of doctrine which were "present existing and established standards of doctrine" in 1808, when the first restrictive rule was enacted, and which had become a part of the Constitution of the Church at the time when the Church was organized.

Further, in the same Service Book, were formal services for setting apart and ordaining the preachers and regular clergy of the new Church, and these forms, as well as the entire Ritual, contain many, and vital, doctrinal teachings.

These, as well as the Articles of Religion, and the Creed, were adopted by the same organizing Conference that created the Methodist Episcopal Church, and this

adoption by the organizing Conference gave them a peculiarly authoritative standing, and in so far as they phrased doctrines, they were, in 1808, "present existing and established standards of doctrine."

They were under the control of the kind of a General Conference that existed at the beginning, and down to, and including, the General Conference of 1808, which contained the body of the ministry, the then sovereign power of the Church, but, subsequently to 1808, General Conferences have not had that power to deal with doctrinal formulations, and so a question may be raised as to the right of the delegated General Conference over the Ritual, since 1808, and as to whether it has properly protected these formularies of doctrine.

In harmony with these principles, the Reverend Doctor Daniel Curry, in 1879, held that the Methodist Episcopal Church had a "definite documentary system of belief, by law established," and "that whatever is contained in the 'Articles of Religion,' or the Ritual, (certainly as it was in 1808,) is part of the creed of Methodism, which it is presumed, that the whole Church agrees to as agreeable to the Word of God, and which every minister engages to teach, as of divine authority."[1]

This distinguished authority conceded that the Ritual of the Church was a "part of the creed of Methodism," and, as far as it expressed doctrines, it would seem a necessary deduction that the Ritual, at the time of the adoption of the Constitution of 1808, was to be classed among the "present existing and established standards of doctrine."

Since making this study and reaching these con-

[1] *National Repository*, April, 1879, p. 360.

clusions, we have learned that the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, has been making a formal inquiry into this particular phase of the subject. Its General Conference of 1910 appointed a Commission on the Constitution of that Church, and the said Commission reported to its General Conference of 1914, when the report was spread upon the Journal but no further action was taken. It is regarded as still pending and it is expected it will be acted upon at another Conference.

As to the Ritual, this Commission held that "the Ritual is a part of the doctrinal Constitution of the Church,"[1] and in the report the Commission says:

"It is our judgment, not hastily but deliberately reached, that the forms for the administration of Baptism and the Lord's Supper and the ordination services cannot be changed by a simple majority vote of the General Conference. Should it be thought best to change any of these forms, it ought to be done in a constitutional manner. We therefore advise that the forms as contained in the Discipline of 1808 be replaced in the next edition of the Discipline and remain there until by the constitutional process a change be made."

This is in effect a declaration that the Ritual was one of the "present existing and established standards of doctrine" and that it was under the protection of the constitution and could not be changed simply by a vote of a General Conference.

A Church catechism is a formulation of doctrinal teachings, and, if the Church at that time had a recognized Catechism, it would be one of the "standards

[1] Rembert G. Smith, D. D., in *The Methodist Review*, Nashville, October, 1917, p. 605.

of doctrine" then "present existing," and it would have come under the protection of the "first restrictive rule." It may be asked, therefore, Was there a Catechism in the Church in the early years or down to 1808? This may require a little historical examination.

In Wesley's "Sunday Service" there was no Catechism, but the Reverend John Wesley had prepared one long years before that, and for many years it had been in use among his people.

Indeed in January, 1736, when he was in Georgia, Mr. Wesley began to prepare a "Children's Catechism."[1]

In another place, the Reverend Nehemiah Curnock, the editor of the new Journal of the Reverend John Wesley, has a foot-note in regard to this little work. In that Mr. Curnock says:

"Wesley translated from Abbé Fleury and M. Poiret for his 'Instructions for Children' (1745). Translated into Latin and published in 1748, it became a Kingswood School-book, running through several editions until 1812."[2]

Wesley himself entered in his Journal under date of July 4, 1743: "Monday, and the following days, I had time to finish the *Instructions for Children*."[3]

John Wesley, in his life of the Reverend John Fletcher, remarks that, "He (Fletcher) had likewise proposed writing various little tracts, for the use of the schools," but then he adds a foot-note in which Mr. Wesley says: "I do not regret his not living to write those tracts; because I despair of seeing any in the English tongue superior to those extracts from

[1] Wesley's Journal (by Curnock), Vol. I, p. 134.

[2] *Ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 446, note.

[3] *Ibid.*

Abbé Fleury and Mr. Poiret, published under the title of 'Instructions for Children.' I have never yet seen any thing comparable to them, either for depth of sense, or plainness of language." [1]

Of this little work, Rev. Luke Tyerman, the author of "The Life and Times of the Rev. John Wesley, M. A.," remarks:

"In July, 1743, Wesley wrote his 'Instructions for Children,' which reached a second edition in 1745, 12mo, 38 pages. Prefixed, was a preface, addressed 'to all parents and schoolmasters,' stating that a great part of the tract was translated from the French and that it contained 'the true principles of the Christian education of children,' and these 'should in all reason be instilled into them, as soon as they can distinguish good from evil.'

"The first twelve lessons are a catechism, respecting God, the Creation and the fall of man, man's redemption, the means of grace, hell, and heaven. Then follow lessons how to regulate our desires, understanding, joy, and practices." [2]

In the British Minutes, of course written by John Wesley, it is said: "Give the children the 'Instructions for Children,' and encourage them to get them by heart. Indeed, you will find it no easy matter to teach the ignorant the principles of religion. So true is the remark of Archbishop Usher: 'Great scholars may think this work beneath them. But they should consider, the laying the foundation skillfully, as it is of

[1] Wesley's "Works," Amer. Ed., New York, 1853; Vol. VI, p. 467.

[2] Luke Tyerman: "Life and Times of the Rev. John Wesley, M. A., Founder of the Methodists," New York, 1872, Vol. I, p. 433.

the greatest importance, so it is the masterpiece of the wisest builder. And let the wisest of us all try, whenever we please, we shall find, that to lay this groundwork rightly, to make the ignorant understand the grounds of religion, will put us to the trial of all our skill."[1]

In another place, Wesley says to his preachers: "Go into every house" and "read, explain, enforce . . . 'Instructions for Children.'"

This little work passed through a number of revisions from 1744 to 1789.

With Wesley's commands to use this little catechism, it goes without saying that it must have had a wide circulation, and, doubtless, at a very early day found its way to America.

The organizing Conference of 1784, not only recognized it, but took a specific order in regard to it, and, under the "business of an Assistant," placed the direction: "to take care that every Society be duly supplied with the *Instructions for Children.*"[2] Further, the same thing was repeated in the Book of Discipline of 1786.[3]

The Book of Discipline for 1787, under the head of the duty of Deacons, specifies among the duties, "To take care that every Society be duly supplied with books: particularly with the . . . Instructions for Children . . . which ought to be in every house."[4]

[1] "The Large Minutes," Edition 1791, the year Mr. Wesley died. Wesley's "Works," Amer. Ed., New York, 1853, Vol. V, pp. 215, 216.

[2] "Discipline," issued 1785, Ques. 60, Ans. 7.

[3] Ques. 57, Ans. 7.

[4] "Discipline," 1787, Section XI, Ques. 2, Ans. 8.

In 1788, under the heading, "On the Instruction of Children," is the direction: "Procure our instructions for them, and let all who can, read and commit them to memory" [1] and the same appeared in the Discipline of 1789.

In 1800 reference was made to a "Catechism," and, in 1808, to "Catechisms," with a request that they be committed to memory, and to the duty of the preacher to impress them on the minds and hearts of the young.[2]

These facts show that at the very beginning of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and in 1808, there was a Catechism which was recognized and used. This, then, was one of the "present existing and established standards of doctrine" in that period.

In brief, any formulation of doctrine duly adopted, authorized or recognized, at the beginning of the Church, or existing in 1808, was one of the "present existing and established standards of doctrine," and all such formulations were protected even from the delegated General Conference, and it would seem that all these standards had the touch of John Wesley. Whether any General Conference has failed to strictly observe the first restrictive rule, and has undertaken to change the standards simply by its own vote, may be a proper study for the Church historian.

[1] "Discipline," 1788, Section XXVI, Ans. 2.

[2] Bishop Matthew Simpson: "Cyclopedia of Methodism"; Philadelphia, Louis H. Everts, 1881, Fourth Revised Edition, Art. "Catechism," pp. 171, 172.

XIX

DOCTRINES AND DISCIPLINE

EVERY four years, following a session of the Quadrennial General Conference, there is published a book, commonly known as the Book of Discipline, or, more briefly, "The Discipline," but on its title page, one reads: "Doctrines and Discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church."

This has grown out of the Minutes of the early American Conferences, which followed the form of the previous British Minutes. In both of them there were rules and regulations, and also expressions as to doctrines.

Originally they were entitled "Conversations." Thus the very early English Minutes were "Minutes of Several Conversations between the Reverend John Wesley and others," the others being his preachers.

The Minutes of the first Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church had the following description on the title page:

"Minutes of several Conversations between the Rev. Thomas Coke, LL. D.,[1] the Rev. Francis Asbury, and others, at a Conference begun in Baltimore, in the State of Maryland, on Monday, the 27th[2] of December, in the year 1784: composing a form of Discipline for the

[1] Doctor Coke was not an LL. D., but a D. C. L.

[2] The Conference actually came together and began the sessions on the 24th of December.

Ministers, Preachers, and other members of the Methodist Episcopal Church in America. Philadelphia: Printed by Charles Cist, in Arch-street, the corner of Fourth-street, in 1785."

In 1786 the publication was called: "The General Minutes of the Conferences of the Methodist Episcopal Church in America, forming the Constitution of the said Church." In 1787 it was called "A Form of Discipline for the Ministers, Preachers, and members of the Methodist Episcopal Church in America." In 1788, the same general title was used.

In 1790, there was a new insertion and the title read: "A Form of Discipline for the Ministers, Preachers, and Members, now comprehending the Principles and Doctrines of the Methodist Episcopal Church in America."

In 1792, the year of the first quadrennial General Conference, the title of the book was made to read for the first time: "The Doctrines and Discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church in America," and that has continued ever since, though latterly in the more abbreviated form: "Doctrines and Discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church."

In the very early days when the work was called "The Minutes of Several Conversations" or "The General Minutes of the Conferences," there was more or less of religious doctrine in this periodical publication, though, in the early years of the Methodist Episcopal Church, there was no attempt to make it the depository of all the doctrinal documents of the denomination, and the standards had authority, though they were not printed in what came to be known as "The Discipline."

Thus the Articles of Religion were authoritative before they were printed in the Discipline. Likewise the General Rules were of authority long before they appeared as one of the documents of the Discipline. In the same way the Ritual existed and was authoritative years before it was placed in the Book of Discipline. So their authority was not dependent upon their physical location in or with that particular book. Ultimately they were bound up in the Discipline but that association did not give or add to their authority. Their authority came from the power that made them.

The General Rules, though they had been in existence and of authority since 1743, were not inserted in the Book of Discipline until 1789, when they were placed as Section XXXV, the last section in the Discipline. This seems to have been editorial action for there was no General Conference in 1789, and so no General Conference to order it. They were, however, of authority irrespective of that.

The Articles of Religion were not placed in the Book of Discipline until years after they had been adopted by the Church. They became part of the Book of Discipline in 1790 when they formed Section XXXVI. This again seems to have been the work of the editors for no General Conference met in 1790.

While the General Rules and the Articles were not parts of the Discipline in 1788, nevertheless the writer has a copy of the Discipline of that year where the Rules and Articles as two separate documents are bound with the Discipline as are other publications, but they are not indexed or numbered as parts of the Book of Discipline. Then in 1789 the Rules were printed as a section of the Discipline, and the next

year the Articles were inserted also as a section, though there was no General Conference in 1789 or 1790 to so order.

The Ritual was placed in the Form of Discipline, first in 1792. In 1796 it was omitted, to make room for the Notes of Coke and Asbury on the Discipline, but the Ritual was returned to the Book of Discipline in 1800, when the next quadrennial edition of the Discipline was printed. The Ritual did not lose any authority by being taken out of the Book of Discipline, as it did not gain any by being put in. It had authority independently of the Book of Discipline.

Prior to these insertions in the Discipline the Articles of Religion, and the Ritual were printed in the 1784 and 1786 editions of the "Sunday Service," which was a book of authority also, but as the printing of regular editions of this Service Book ceased with the edition of 1786, and there was an increasing failure to keep up the forms of Morning and Evening Prayer these organic documents were transferred to the regularly issued book called the Discipline, though, as already seen, they had been printed as separate publications.

Another usage grew up about this time, namely to print and bind with the Discipline certain brief statements of doctrine that seemed to be specially needed. As the Discipline in those days was a very small and thin volume, it could very well stand these additions. But the binding with the Discipline did not make them part of that book.

This introduction of these other documents began in 1788. In 1787 the Minutes had been divided into numbered sections, and were entitled: "A Form of Discipline . . . Arranged under proper Heads, and

Methodized in a more acceptable and easy Manner." In 1788, the same form was used, but at the bottom was an additional line—"With some other useful Pieces annexed." These annexed "pieces" were entitled: "The Scriptural Doctrine of Predestination, Election, and Reprobation," and "Serious Thoughts on the Infallible, Unconditional Perseverance of all that have once experienced Faith in Christ." These were not parts of the Discipline, but, as the announcement stated, were "annexed" thereto.

In 1789, as stated, the General Rules were inserted for the first time as a part of the Discipline, and to the annexed pieces was added "A Plain Account of Christian Perfection, as believed and taught by the Rev. Mr. John Wesley, from the year 1725 to the year 1765," thus making three annexed pieces. They were not parts of the Discipline, but what they said they were, namely, "useful pieces annexed," as Doctor Sherman says, the "Doctrinal tracts, though not an integral part of the Discipline, are bound with it."

In 1790 there was added "An Extract on the Nature and Subjects of Christian Baptism. Extracted from a late Author." In that edition the Articles of Religion and the four doctrinal tracts were incorporated as sections of the work, and its title became "A Form of Discipline for the Ministers, Preachers, and members (now comprehending the Principles and Doctrines) of the Methodist Episcopal Church in America," etc. Whether the incorporation of the Tracts was by authority of the Conference or was an editorial license does not clearly appear. As in the other cases, it may have been editorial, for no General Conference met that year. It will be noted that it was not until the

Articles were inserted in the Discipline in 1790 that the word "Doctrines" was printed on the title page of the Discipline. That made it a book of doctrines as well as discipline. The same form continued in 1791 with the Articles and the four doctrinal tracts.

In 1792 the first quadrennial General Conference met, and a General Conference has met quadrennially ever since. This Conference brought some marked changes, and the title of the Book of Discipline was changed so as to read: "The Doctrines and Discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church, in America," "revised and approved at the General Conference held at Baltimore, in the State of Maryland, in November, 1792, in which Thomas Coke and Francis Asbury presided."

In addition to the four tracts previously mentioned, two others were inserted in 1792, namely, "Of Christian Perfection," which is not the "Plain Account," but a very brief statement; and "Against Antinomianism," which also was very short.

After 1792 the "Extract on the Nature and Subjects of Christian Baptism" disappeared from the Discipline and never was restored.

In 1798 only two doctrinal tracts appear, namely, on "Christian Perfection," and "Against Antinomianism," the tracts on "The Scripture Doctrine of Predestination," "Serious Thoughts on the Infallible, Unconditional Perseverance," and "A Plain Account of Christian Perfection," having been omitted, probably to make room for Coke and Asbury's copious "Notes to the Discipline," which were printed that year in what was called "The Tenth Edition" of the Book of Discipline.

In 1801 again appeared: "Of Christian Perfection," "Against Antinomianism," "Scripture Doctrine of Predestination," "Election, and Reprobation," "Serious Thoughts on the infallible, unconditional Perseverance of all that have once experienced Faith in Christ," and "A Plain Account of Christian Perfection by the Reverend John Wesley," and they continued in the Disciplines for 1804, 1805, and 1808.

In 1804 began the title—"The Doctrines and Discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church," since shortened into "Doctrines and Discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church."

In the General Conference of 1812, which was the first delegated General Cenference, "Jesse Lee moved, that the tracts on doctrine be left out of the future edition of our form of Discipline, and that the following tracts be printed and bound in a separate volume, viz.: 'Predestination Calmly Considered,' 'Scripture Doctrines on Election and Reprobation,' 'On Final Perseverance,' 'A Predestinarian and his Friend,' 'Christian Perfection,' and 'An Antinomian and his Friend.' Carried."[1]

The tracts thereafter did not appear in the book of "Doctrines and Discipline," and it is supposed that the order of the General Conference of 1812 was not carried out for twenty years, and when the book did appear in 1832, it was not exactly as had been directed.

In regard to this Doctor John J. Tigert, of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, says:

"The tracts, which are thirteen in number, do not include all of the six mentioned by title in Jesse Lee's resolution; and include but two of those which had

[1] "General Conference Journal," 1812, Vol. I, p. 121.

formerly appeared in the Discipline—namely, 'Serious Thoughts on the Infallible, Unconditional Perseverance,' etc., and Mr. Wesley's 'Plain Account of Christion Perfection.' Thus it appears that either through long familiarity with the doctrinal contents of the Discipline had made the General Conference of 1812 somewhat unmindful of the special character which the tracts acquired through their incorporation in the Discipline itself; or, in the twenty years from 1812 to 1832, the Disciplinary thread which bound together the tracts was lost.

"The language of the 'advertisement' (announcing and introducing the volume,) plainly implies that the Book Agents of 1832 believed they were (1) obeying the mandate of the General Conference of 1812, and (2) publishing all the doctrinal tracts which had previously been included in the Discipline; though they did neither. They say: 'Several of the following Tracts were formerly published in the form of Discipline; but as this undergoes a revision once in four years, the General Conference of 1812 ordered these Tracts to be left out of the Discipline; and, that they might still be within the reach of every reader, directed them to be published in a separate volume. They have been accordingly prepared and published in this form, in a stereotyped edition.' "[1]

The taking out of these so-called "Doctrinal Tracts" did not destroy them. They still had an existence elsewhere, but they were not parts of the Book of Discipline.

[1] John J. Tigert, D. D., LL. D.: "The Doctrines of the Methodist Episcopal Church in America"; Cincinnati and New York; 1902, Vol. I, pp. xiv, xv.

What rank had those old doctrinal tracts?

They were not classed as of the same rank as the Discipline, though they were bound up with the Book of Discipline. Jesse Lee simply called them "the tracts on doctrine" and the title page of the Discipline of 1788 styled them "Some other useful Pieces annexed." They were not of the Discipline, but other than the Discipline, and annexed simply because they were useful, and, at that time, there was room for them.

As to the substance of the tracts it was simply similar to, or the same as, was found in Wesley's Sermons, Wesley's Notes, and what appeared in the old Conference Minutes. If the matter in the tracts was already in Wesley's Sermons, Wesley's Notes, or the old Minutes, they were not separate and distinct standards, but were merely special portions of the standards. Though they contained the same truths, it would not therefore follow that they, as documents, were standards of doctrine.

At the beginning they were simply "useful pieces annexed" to the Discipline. Later they were slipped into the body of the Discipline as sections. Then they were omitted at pleasure as though they were not an essential part of the Book of Discipline, and, finally, they were taken out altogether.

They were "useful pieces" as brief statements or restatements of views, but they never had the rank or authority of the Articles of Religion, or the General Rules, or Wesley's Fifty-two Sermons, or Wesley's "Notes on the New Testament," or the doctrinal formulations that appeared in the old Minutes, or the Apostles' Creed, or the early Ritual.

Furthermore there is no evidence that they were put into the Discipline by act or order of the General Conference, but, the evidence seems to show, the insertions were merely the acts of the editors or publishers of the Discipline, and usually in the intervals between the General Conferences, and not in a General Conference year.

As a matter of fact whatever was "useful" in these tracts had already appeared in Wesley's writings and the duly recognized standards, and their "usefulness" was mainly in their brevity.

They served a purpose, but that they were put in and taken out at will would seem to indicate that it was understood that they did not possess the authority of the Articles of Religion and other documents which were conceded to be authoritative standards, and that they did not even have ordinary disciplinary rank.

It may now be asked: What is the present status of the "doctrinal tracts" which were printed, or bound, with the Book of Discipline in the early period of the Church?

At the present time they have almost entirely passed out of sight and memory, and the mass of the membership does not know that they ever had an existence. That fact, however, would have little or no value, if it were clear that they were at any time duly "established standards of doctrine," and that they had never constitutionally lost that rank. If they were standards, then it would be the duty of the ministry and the membership to know what they are and to treat them with due respect. But there is no proof that they were ever made official standards, and if they were not then there is not the same obligation. Nevertheless, even if

not official standards, they still would be "useful pieces," and for reading and study would continue to be profitable, but, whatever authoritative doctrines they may present are found in the unquestionable standards already indicated, and so, if they are not accessible to the mass of the membership but only to the historian, the loss is not vital or fatal.

If it be asked what doctrines did the Book of Discipline contain in 1792 when it was first called "The Doctrines and Discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church in America?" it would not be a fair deduction to infer that it contained at all times all the doctrines of the Church, but that it did contain doctrines recognized by the denomination. Indeed we know that for years the Discipline was issued without the most standard of the standards.

But, leaving out the "doctrinal tracts," what doctrinal expositions did the book called "Doctrines and Discipline" contain? In the first place there were "The Articles of Religion," "The Ritual," including the "Apostles' Creed," the "Lord's Prayer" and the doctrinal suggestions in the "General Rules," and the insertion of the Articles of Religion alone would have justified the use of the word "Doctrines," but not to mean all the doctrines.

When the doctrinal tracts were entirely eliminated, these, and other things of a doctrinal character remained, so that the Book of Discipline still is a book of doctrines as well as of Discipline.

XX

DOCTRINAL OBLIGATIONS OF THE MEMBERSHIP

IT is asked: Does the obligation as to the doctrines and the standards of doctrine in the Methodist Episcopal Church apply to the lay members of the Church?

That an obligation rests on the ministry is perfectly plain, but some have had a notion that the lay membership is free from any such obligation, and, within the Church, is at liberty to hold and advocate any doctrine, and to disavow and antagonize the doctrines and the doctrinal formularies of the Methodist Episcopal Church to which they belong.

If this be so, then the millions of lay members would be within their legal rights if they all refused to believe the formulated doctrines of the Church, positively denied them, spoke against them, and spoke in favor of contrary opinions.

If this were so, then the result of this would be doctrinal anarchy, and would produce confusion in religious thought and teaching, antagonism in religious opinions, and, possibly, personal antagonisms as well, and ultimately result in a disruption of the denomination.

It is inconceivable that any body, religious or otherwise, would deliberately incorporate within itself the seeds of its own dissolution. All human organizations of this nature provide, or intend to provide, for their own perpetuity, and not for their destruction.

In the same way, when such an organization constructs its organic law, and its statute law based thereon, it expects that those who are in, or who come into, the organism, will conform to these laws.

Being in, or coming into an organization, be it a Church, or any other organization, creates the presumption that those who are in, or come in, will conform to the rules and regulations of the body, and this would be so even if no formal oath, or pledge, were given.

This is a settled principle that membership carries with it the duty of conformity or obedience, and to release the member from such an understood obligation would require some enactment distinctly stating that there is no such requirement for the member.

In other words, the mere being in, or coming into, the organization, carries with it the obligation of conformity, and, in a Church, not only to its statute laws, but also to its organic law, and to its doctrines which are essentially parts of its constitution.

So when a Church frames its doctrines, as it forms its laws, that very fact carries with it the expectation that the entire membership does, or will, accept and obey.

We may ask whether there is any law to the contrary? If there is not, then the natural and legal presumption of obligation holds as to the doctrines of the denomination, as well as to any other agreement whether organic, or by enactment from time to time.

In the first place, then, is there anything in the law of the Methodist Episcopal Church that bears specifically on this matter?

Some have thought the requirement of conformity to

the Articles of Religion applied only to "Ministers or preachers," but, even if this particular law, as it reads, merely applies to "Ministers or preachers," it does not follow that there are not other laws, or legal principles, which apply to the member who is not a "minister or preacher," and a sound legal principle has at least the force of a statute law.

In the first place, the Articles were made for the whole Church, and were to be understood as the expression of the whole Church, and the same would be true, and is true, as to any standard of doctrine which the Church had, or might, set up.

When, therefore, any one came into the Church membership, the natural, and legal, assumption would be that the member accepted and would conform to these standards of the Church.

This particular law was made primarily for the minister or preacher, for he was the one who, professionally, was expected to speak of doctrines, and to instruct the people therein, but the legal presumption, generally speaking and naturally, would be that the member, belonging to the same organization, likewise should and would conform to the doctrines of the Church, as he would to the disciplinary laws of the denomination.

In a very brief time, however, specific laws were framed in the early Church so as to make it perfectly clear that members were not free to speak against the doctrines of the Church, so that the duty of obligation on the part of the lay-member in this regard was made very plain.

In 1792, the same year the law was made in regard to ministers who spoke contrary to the Articles of

Religion, another law was made touching members who spoke against the doctrines of the Church.

This 1792 law read: "If a member of our Church shall be clearly convicted of endeavoring to sow dissension in any of our Societies, by inveighing against either our doctrines, or discipline, such person so offending shall first be reproved by the Senior Minister or Preacher of his Circuit, and if he persist in such pernicious practice he shall be expelled from the society."

Various minor amendments were made to this paragraph, in later years. Thus the words "clearly convicted" were changed, in 1864, to "accused," and "such person" was changed, in 1864, to "the person." From "Senior Minister or Preacher of his Circuit afterward," "afterward" was omitted in 1816, and, in 1864, the phrase was changed to "Preacher in Charge." In 1816 "the Society" was changed to "from the Church," and in 1864 there was inserted "he shall be brought to trial, and if found guilty," "expelled."

So by 1864, the law of 1792 read: "If a member of our Church shall be accused of endeavoring to sow dissensions in any of our societies, by inveighing against either our doctrines or discipline, the person so offending shall first be reproved by the preacher in charge, and if he persist in such pernicious practices, he shall be brought to trial, and if found guilty, expelled."[1]

In 1880 appeared the singular form "dissension,"—"sow dissension." In 1912 a slight change was made in the law. The part "inveighing against its Doctrines or Discipline," was expanded by adding "its Ministers, or in any other manner," so that it read:

[1] Meth. Epis. "Discipline," 1864, Part III, Chap. I, § 5, p. 121.

"by inveighing against its Doctrines or Discipline, its Ministers, or in any other manner" and so it stands at the present time.[1]

So the law of 1792, prohibiting the members of the Church from inveighing against the doctrines of the Church, has continued essentially the same down to the present day, a period of over one hundred and twenty-five years, the changes only making it stronger.

And yet, in spite of all these venerable laws, some have tried to assert that the membership has no obligation in regard to the Church's doctrines or standards of doctrine.

Whatever Wesley may have meant, at the beginning of his career, by taking persons on probation on "one condition" into his initial society, which was not a Church, the Methodist Episcopal Church, which was not a mere "Society" but a Church, has expected loyalty on the part of its lay membership to its doctrines as well as its other laws. It has been shown in a preceding chapter that the "only one condition" has been misinterpreted by some. But that "one condition" was for a religious society and not for a Church, while the Methodist Episcopal Church was a different kind of a body, which established, first, a probationary relation, and, second, a full membership, and for the latter required additional conditions for admission and continuance therein.

However, the Church would not proceed against one who did not utter anything against the doctrines of the Church, either in public or in private, no matter what he might hold in the secrecy of his own mind, and, as long as he did not deny or oppose these doctrines, the

[1] "Discipline," 1916, ¶ 282, p. 196.

Church would put in force no inquisition upon one already in the Church.

The Church does not deal judicially with one's unexpressed thinking, but deals with him for speaking against the doctrines, and this is good philosophy as well as sound equity, for one is supposed to be innocent until proved guilty, and no one is compelled to prove his own innocence.

Further a man's internal reasonings are not necessarily final conclusions, for they are subject to many influences, some of which are exceedingly temporary and quickly pass away. So a man may think one thing to-day and the opposite thing to-morrow. To-day a question may arise in his mind, which to-morrow he may dismiss with scorn. Even a doubt may be merely an unanswered question, and, with a little time, the answer may come and the doubt fly away. Thus the mental processes with patient waiting, or quiet inquiry, and sincere thought, may right themselves.

So the judicial action of the Church does not lie against what a man may think at a given moment, but against what he says and does, or attempts to do, and it makes no inquiry as to his secret intellections. Hence, the man who remains quiet while his mind struggles with theological problems, and does nothing to disturb the Church as to the matter of its doctrines, will not be interfered with by the Church law.

If one gets into such a mental condition of uncertainty, he should give the Church the benefit of the doubt, and also give himself, in a sense, the benefit of the doubt, and form no adverse judgment in haste, but quietly, with prayer, study, and calm reflection seek the broad and quiet place of conviction and confidence,

where the truth, reason, the Scriptures, and Divine grace can bring him.

The Church always demanded a thorough examination of all persons before they were admitted into full membership.

In the Minutes of the organizing Conference of 1784, there appears the following: "Q. 16. How shall we prevent improper Persons from insinuating into the Society?" and the following answers were formulated: "A. 1. Give Tickets to none till they are recommended by a Leader, with whom they have met at least two Months on Trial. 2. Give Notes to none but those who are recommended by one you know, or till they have met three or four times in a Class. 3. Give them the Rules the first Time they meet," and this was placed in the first Discipline.

So an individual could not force himself into membership. He had to be tested by his Leader who would know his conduct, his experience, and his views, and the Leader would report in the case. All the details are not specified but it is inconceivable that any leader would recommend the reception of any one who was out of harmony with the doctrines of the Church which had been formulated and were well known.

In 1787 the word "themselves" was supplied so that the question read "insinuating themselves into the Society." Later the law required the recommendation of "the Leaders and Stewards' Meeting" where such a board existed, thus making it more stringent. "Two months" was soon changed to "six months on Trial," making it still more difficult to enter the Church without a thorough test in every respect.

Thus it went on until, in 1840, the old answer was

modified so that this part read: "Let none be received into the Church, until they are recommended by a leader with whom they have met at least six months on trial, and have been baptized; and shall on examination by the minister in charge, before the Church, give satisfactory assurances both of the correctness of their faith, and their willingness to observe and keep the rules of the Church. Nevertheless, if a member in good standing in any other orthodox Church shall desire to unite with us, such applicant may, by giving satisfactory answers to the usual inquiries, be received into full fellowship." [1]

So it was perfectly clear in 1840 that the candidates were to "give satisfactory assurances of the correctness of their faith," which doubtless was the case many years before, but now they were to have an "examination by the minister in charge, before the Church." It is, therefore, plain that long ago there was a doctrinal obligation upon the lay member, and the fair presumption is that essentially the same inquiry and assurance were expected from the beginning though in a less formal manner, and that essentially the same thing was involved in the "satisfactory answers to the usual inquiries" on the part of those coming from "any other orthodox Church," which further implies that orthodoxy was required.

Then in 1864 the General Conference established a fixed ritual form for the public reception of persons from probation, and in it made a definite demand in standard phrase for belief in the religious doctrines of the denomination.

This, however, was simply putting in fixed and pub-

[1] "Book of Discipline," 1840, Chapter II, Section 2, p. 84.

lic form what in the examination and consideration of candidates for admission into "full membership" had been used in principle and fact from the early years.

In this formal service, first, came the question: "Do you here, in the presence of God and of this congregation, renew the solemn promise contained in the baptismal covenant, ratifying and confirming the same, and acknowledging yourselves bound faithfully to observe and keep that covenant?"

"Ans. I do."

That covenant had a declaration of faith in the Apostles' Creed which was presented with great completeness.

Then was asked the question: "Have you saving faith in the Lord Jesus Christ?" To which the candidate was expected to reply: "I trust I have."

He was to have not only faith, but also saving faith, that is to say, by trusting in the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation.

Then came the question:

"Do you believe in the doctrines of the Holy Scripture, as set forth in the Articles of Religion of the Methodist Episcopal Church?"

"Ans. I do."

This was followed by the inquiry: "Will you cheerfully be governed by the rules of the Methodist Episcopal Church, hold sacred the ordinances of God, and endeavor, as much as in you lies, to promote the welfare of your brethren and the advancement of the Redeemer's kingdom?"

"Ans. I will."

In the very early period there was most careful

scrutiny of the individuals who sought full membership. Persons might be received on probation without any very particular examination as to their theological faith. The "only one condition," namely, "a desire to flee from the wrath to come, and to be saved from their sins," might be sufficient for that, but there never was a time in the history of the Church when great care was not exercised in regard to the reception of persons into membership, and even as to their reception on probation, and, when it came to the matter of full membership, "correctness of their faith" was a very important item.

In those early years it was not necessary to mention every detail of the traditional process or in the legal enactments, because there was a common understanding and usage that guided administrators, but, as the years went on and the older generation passed away the unwritten understanding was not sufficient and detailed specifications had to be put into the law.

This is shown in the gradual elaboration of the law as illustrated by the enactments herein cited. Thus in the act of 1840 requiring "satisfactory assurances" of "the correctness of their faith" to be given "before the Church," and the detailed service adopted in 1864, and, so, the law of the present time states that the candidates for admission into full membership must give "satisfactory evidence of the correctness of their faith, and of their knowledge of the rules and regulations of the Methodist Episcopal Church,"[1] and the ritual declares that the candidates shall affirm their belief "in the Doctrines of the Holy Scriptures as set forth in the Articles of Religion of the Methodist Episcopal Church,"

[1] "Discipline," 1916, ¶ 48, § 3, p. 51.

and declare that they will "be governed by the Rules of the Methodist Episcopal Church." [1]

The whole law of the Church was for the whole Church. So the very first enactments of the Organizing Conference were thus described: "Comprising a form of Discipline for the Ministers, Preachers, *and other members* of the Methodist Episcopal Church in America."

"The Sunday Service" of 1784 was for "the Methodists in North America," and the edition of 1786 was for "the Methodists in the United States of America," not for one class or certain individuals, but for all.

Then when we remember these facts of history and especially the law of 1792 that has remained ever since, only strengthening with the growth of the years, it is perfectly plain that the Methodist Episcopal Church expects its lay members, as well as its ministers, to accept and respect the doctrines of the Church.

That is the expectation on the ground of membership, that was the expectation at the beginning, and that has been implied and asserted in the law from the earliest period down to the present time.

[1] "Discipline," 1916, ¶ 514, p. 397.

XXI

COMPLEMENTAL NATURE OF THE STANDARDS

THE standards of doctrine in Methodism, and particularly in the Methodist Episcopal Church, as has been seen, are not in one formulation only, but are found in various forms of construction.

This at first sight may seem to those who form a hasty judgment to be a disadvantage, but, by others who have studied the system with care, it has been pronounced a positive advantage.

The varied formularies are not contradictory but they are varied in their setting of the truth, and the same fact is seen in different lights, and it may be under different conditions, thus giving a fuller presentation than could be the case if there was only a single method of formulation.

The Articles of Religion of Methodism stand out as the chief and most precise formulations of the doctrines, and more in conformity with the historic forms of the more ancient confessions of faith, and, as to them, there can be no question about their being standards of doctrine.

They occupy the position of being a comprehensive presentation of the great fundamentals of Christian belief, and that particularly from the Protestant point of view, but freed from the phrasings of extreme Calvinism.

It may be said that the Articles do not contain everything that may or should be believed, but that might be said of any formulation ever drawn up by human minds. It was not necessary for the Articles to contain everything, but they do contain very much, and, further, the Articles did not need to embrace everything, for before the Articles of Religion were prepared and adopted, Methodism had accepted well-known and comprehensive doctrines, and had its doctrinal standards.

Here appears the advantage of having various formulations, and, so, in instances, it was not necessary to state in one what was in another, or to state it in precisely the same way, and, so, a restatement of some particulars was not needed in the Articles of Religion which were subsequently made.

In the Apostles' Creed, the condensed creed of the Churches coming down from a very early period of Christianity, and undergoing some modification in later centuries, Methodism is in line with the Churches of general Christianity, and particularly, those that adhere to the essential principles of the Protestant Reformation.

Then back of, and before, the Articles, were, and are, Wesley's first Fifty-two Sermons, in which are carefully stated the doctrines with a living application to the present age, and with a style of presentation that could not be given in technically framed articles.

They contained many essentials that were in the Articles and the Creed, but gave them a living setting as related to the Sacred Scriptures and to human life. Here is more of the actual and practical, and more of the background of human experience, and especially

spiritual experience. They made a preaching creed and a creed that could be preached.

In them Sin is a great fact, but salvation is shown to be a greater fact. There is sin and penalty, but more, there is redemption, and a redeemer who made a sacrificial atonement for the sins of the human race. There are repentance and prayer, and saving faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. There is the new birth from above, and with the regeneration in the soul, there is justification, and, with this spiritual beginning, there follows holy living, Christian perfection, and eternal life.

The Articles give the formal statement, but the sermons deal with life and living, and, presenting the doctrine, also, and at the same time, give the demonstration and the illustration of the truth and its application to the people.

The discourses may be less precise, or more general in their doctrinal statements, than the articles or a succinct confession of faith, but they have their own peculiar merits, and even in the matter of precision, it is not clear that any of the formulations of the Churches have any decided advantage over John Wesley's sermons, for Wesley was a man of precision in expression as well as in action.

In Wesley's Notes on the New Testament, the doctrines are found in another setting, linked with the Scriptures, so that with the statement of Scripture there is the interpretation, the reason, and the proof.

Then, in the early Minutes of the British and American Conferences, there were both brief and elaborate doctrinal formulations, exact in their statements and as precise in their phrasing as might be found in the

learned confessions of the older centuries, and, often, in the form of question and answer, so that the plain mind could easily comprehend while the scholarly mind would be satisfied.

In addition there were other formularies containing doctrinal declarations, which were duly established by the Church, and which presented the truth though in a somewhat different manner. Thus the Morning Prayer, and the Evening Prayer, and the Litany, and the various formal services that came under the head of Liturgy or Ritual.

So one might gather from the Baptismal Services, the Communion, and the Form for the Burial of the Dead most of the doctrines of Methodism, as to redemption from sin, by Christ's atonement, as to the consecrated life, and as to the eternal life after physical death, and, in the same way, from the forms for setting apart the clergy, could gather the essential nature and duties of its ministry and the doctrines involved.

Further the doctrines could be learned not only from formularies which were "existing and established" in 1808, and also from formularies made since that time, if they have been constitutionally made by the Church.

All these may be classed as "Standards of doctrine," but, because of peculiarities in themselves, may be classified differently under sub-heads.

The Articles of Religion, because of their distinctive form, stand out conspicuously among, and from, all the others. The Apostles' Creed, likewise, has a form that distinguishes it from all the other standards.

On the other hand, Wesley's Sermons and Wesley's Notes on the New Testament, which are equally standard, though not cast in the same rhetorical form, or the

same logical form, may be classed by themselves and interpreted after a somewhat different method.

In this class of standards as the doctrines are not codified, or so precisely stated in a detached or succinct form, they may be used in a more general sense, for example, than the Articles, and the points must be considered rather than merely the exact phrasing, and yet the doctrinal statement may be just as plain, as if stated in the form of an article, or mere proposition or declaration, and, because of these differences in the form of the standards, they should be compared and read together, so that one may throw light upon another.

Principal Shaw, of the Wesleyan Theological College, of Montreal, has remarked that:

"It is sometimes said in pleasantry that the Methodists have the longest creed in Christendom, in the Sermons, Notes, and Articles. There are certainly some advantages in such a mode of declaring our faith. First, it is more easily understood, because of explicit statement; and, second, it is more free from shibboleths, and is not so likely to create a blind, narrow prejudice for a human form of words. The meaning is explained rather than condensed."[1]

The peculiar difference between the Methodistic standards of doctrine and the declaratory confessional forms of most of the Churches, has been pointed out by the Reverend Doctor Harrison, of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, in his introduction to "Wesley's Doctrinal Standards," published by the Church, South, and which contain Wesley's first fifty-two sermons.

In this introduction, Doctor Harrison maintains the

[1] Rev. William I. Shaw, D. D., LL. D.: "Digest of the Doctrinal Standards of the Methodist Church"; Toronto, 1895, p. x.

advantages of doctrinal standards in sermonic form, and says:

"There is, however, a marked difference between the doctrinal standards of Methodism and those of other Churches. Protestant Churches have adopted, almost without exception, confessions of faith or articles of religion as the sole standard of doctrinal teaching. These they regard as brief summaries of the gospel contained in the New Testament. Mr. Wesley departed from the custom of ages by giving to his followers not merely the outlines of a system of truth to be subscribed and believed, but the method and substance of doctrine in the form of sermons delivered from the pulpit. The wisdom of this method the experience of more than a century has demonstrated. The brief, and often ambiguous, forms of a creed may sometimes promote, instead of preventing, dissension and controversy. In such a concise statement the mere *letter* of the truth can be recorded. In the Wesleyan Standards we have the *spirit* of the truth also. The manner of presenting the great doctrines of the gospel, the arguments by which the truth of God may be most successfully defended, and the objections which the sinful nature of man presents in the form of excuse or extenuation for neglect or abuse of the divine mercy, are all set forth with felicity of diction and comprehensiveness of knowledge. The forms of error which Mr. Wesley attacks are not those which are peculiar to a country or an age. However they may change the distinctive expressions which apply to them in the eighteenth century, these errors are still in existence, and must be overthrown if the gospel is to meet the wants of the world and destroy the kingdom of Satan."

The Reverend Professor N. Burwash, of the Methodist Church of Canada, and Professor of Theology in the University of Victoria College, in his introduction to "Wesley's Standard Sermons" says:

"The precise form which the standards of any Church will take will thus naturally depend on the circumstances of its origin. A Church arising out of a great *intellectual* movement, like the Churches of the Reformation, will naturally fortify itself with creeds, confessions, and catechisms; inasmuch as its existence and success depend so largely upon the logical validity of its teachings. A Church arising out of a great *evangelistic* movement quite as naturally finds its standard in a *grand distinctive norm or type of preaching;* and, in like manner, every Church driven to justify itself by final appeal to the Word of God, must have its canon of interpretation. The growth of all the great Christian symbols will furnish illustrations of these principles. The Church of the Apostles was an evangelistic Church. Its standard of doctrine was first of all a *type of preaching*, of which we doubtless have a compressed yet faithful exhibit in the synoptic Gospels. The Pauline and the Petrine, Luke and Mark, set forth one Christ, in essentially one gospel, of which John, a little further on, sets forth the more perfect unification and expansion—just as Matthew had given the foundation. To this consensus of preaching, this normal or standard gospel, Paul makes constant reference in his Epistles, although it had not been reduced to written form. But it was well known to all the Christian Churches. No one can read, especially in the original, such expressions as 'another gospel,' 'the gospel of Christ,' 'the gospel which was preached of me,'

(see Gal. i. 6, etc.,) without feeling that even then there was a familiar form of preaching (A. D. 56 or 57). In the pastoral epistles this fact becomes still more manifest in such phrases as, 'no other doctrine,' 1 Tim. i. 3; 'according to the glorious gospel,' v. 11; 'words of faith and good doctrine,' iv. 6; 'the doctrine,' v. 16; 'the doctrine which is according to godliness,' vi. 3; 'that which is committed to thy trust,' v. 20; 'the form (υπωτυπωσιν) of sound words,' 2 Tim. i. 13. See also 2 Tim. ii. 2, and iii. 16, in which last passage the norm of preaching is carried up to its fountainhead in the Word of God.

"The first standard of doctrine was the substance of what the Apostles *preached;* and even the first Creed, the so-called Apostles', was but a memorized brief of the same.

"We, therefore, claim for the 'Sermons' and 'Notes' a foremost place among the Christian symbols. The sermons set before us *that great, distinctive type and standard of gospel preaching by which Methodism is what she is* as a great living Church. When she ceases to preach according to this type and standard she will no longer be Wesleyan Methodism. No other Church of modern times can boast of such *a standard of preaching, so mighty and pervasive* in its power to preserve the perfect doctrinal as well as spiritual *unity* of the entire body. God save us from the day when the Methodist ministry shall cease to study this standard, and to preach according thereto!" [1]

Of the Notes on the New Testament, by Mr. Wesley, and on the Articles of Religion, Doctor Burwash also points out that

[1] Professor Burwash: Introduction, pp. viii–x.

"The Notes have also their peculiar and unique value. They open up to us the mode of interpretation by which the grand type of preaching contained in the Sermons was derived from its fountainhead—the New Testament of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. They are thus the link which binds our subordinate standards with the original apostolic standard. Without that link our form of preaching would be deprived of its divine authorization.

"But the Articles of Religion have their own appropriate place in our doctrinal foundations. They indicate that which we have received as our common heritage from the great principles of the Protestant Reformation, and from the still more ancient conflicts with error in the days of Augustine and Athanasius. They represent the Methodist Church in its unity with Christendom and Protestantism; but the 'Sermons and Notes' represent it in its one completeness as a living form of religion, called into being by the Spirit and Providence of God."[1]

Doctor Burwash makes the distinction that Wesley's first Fifty-two Sermons constitute the standard of preaching; his Notes on the New Testament, the standard of interpretation; and the Articles of Religion, the standard of unity with the Churches of the Reformation.

Thus he arranges the threefold standards of Wesleyanism:—

"I. The Standard of Preaching—the fifty-two sermons embraced in the four volumes.

"II. The Standard of Interpretation—the notes on the New Testament.

[1] Professor Burwash: Introduction, p. x.

"III. The Standard of Unity with the Sister Churches of the Reformation—the Twenty-five Articles."[1]

Thus Methodism is not limited to a single formulation, as is the case with many Churches, but has different presentations of its doctrines and they differ in their method, so that one standard is the complement of another, and all the standards are complemental to each other, and in this, Methodism may claim a decided advantage over Churches which have but one doctrinal standard.

[1] Rev. N. Burwash, S. T. D., Introduction, p. xi.

XXII

INTERPRETING WESLEY

JOHN WESLEY lived a long life in which he said much, wrote much, did much, and engaged in myriad forms of activity, and continued his work up almost to the very end.

In such a life with its copious utterances and varied activities, with its variation in circumstances at different times, might, on particular points, start questions as to the exact explanation of acts or as to the meaning and intention of certain opinions.

A growing man would naturally reach maturer views as the years went on, and, when statements made at different periods were placed side by side they might show some degree of divergence in phrase or fact that would call for elucidation.

So, even in a life like that of John Wesley, there might be a call for critical and judicious interpretation, and it may appear that sometimes he claimed the right to interpret himself. So his students may interpret Wesley, but remembering that a seeming inconsistency may sometimes be the best kind of consistency.

John Wesley was a voluminous writer and an extensive publisher. Indeed it would be difficult to find any single man throughout the centuries who, by his own writings and the books he published, exerted a greater influence than John Wesley, or, indeed, as great an

influence as this wonderful man, who, born in 1703, lived into the year 1791, an incessant and energetic worker from his early manhood quite to the week of his death in his eighty-eighth year.

His followers, however, never felt themselves under obligation to accept everything he wrote or spoke, and they made a distinction between their official standards of doctrine and his other utterances. They recognized the doctrinal standards as binding, but the individuals felt free to accept or reject other things that Wesley might utter, or had uttered, in speech or in print.

All that Wesley said or wrote is worthy of most respectful consideration, but Methodism has never bound its adherents to accept every view that he expressed, though it did and does insist on the authority of its doctrinal standards which had been written by Wesley.

In this connection, a word of caution should be dropped as to the proper course in reading and studying the writings of the Reverend John Wesley. It is to be remembered, as already stated, that Wesley lived a long life and wrote very much, and with great rapidity, so that it was possible for such a writer in the course of years to modify some of his earlier statements and even to say opposite things.

Among other things we know that in his early ministry, before he established his Societies, Wesley was a high-churchman, and we also know that in the same period, but a little later, he changed his views and became a very low-churchman, and such he was as the leader of his great evangelistic movement, and as the head of the new ecclesiastical organization which grew up around him.

That being the case, it would be manifestly unfair to quote his early and high-church views as though they were the views he held throughout his life.

It is not an uncommon thing for a long-lived and voluminous writer to change his views as the years go on, and it has been possible for one to endeavor to show that such a writer has contradicted himself, when in all fairness it is not strictly a contradiction, but a difference of opinion, or a development in statement, coming from closer study and greater experience. In such a case we are not to hold the man forever to the utterance which he has discarded, but to credit him with his later or final expression, or, at least, with his most mature judgment.

John Wesley lived into his eighty-eighth year, and was in active public life for over fifty years, preaching many thousands of sermons, and writing and publishing many books and pamphlets, so that if in the course of the half century he may have said some things which were not in perfect harmony, he is not to be charged with having contradicted himself. A better word would be that he corrected himself, which would not be to his discredit, but greatly to his credit as it indicated his development of thought.

Wesley was always a student and a growing man. As with any one, there was a time when he might have been called immature, but, as the years went on, he became more and more mature, and, perhaps, better balanced in his statements, though he really matured quite early in his career.

If, then, in his extensive writings through so many years, it may chance to be found that, in different places, and at different times, Wesley varies the point

or its expression, he should not be held to his immature utterance, but, discarding that, the student should give the preference to his maturest and most precise statement of a doctrine.

In some instances Mr. Wesley did revise his views or their phrasing. In such an instance we are bound to give him his preference as to the point or the phrase, rather than to fasten on him his less mature or less carefully framed expressions which he had abandoned, and yet some have picked out cast-off expressions as though they really represented Wesley's views. If sometimes Wesley may seem not quite in harmony with himself in the use of a word, possibly using it differently in two places, this is not to be regarded as remarkable when we remember how much and how rapidly he wrote, and how much he wrote or prepared for the press when he was riding in his coach or travelling some other way. Where we can find what he meant to be an exact use or definition, then the other uses should be explained by, and harmonized with, that, and not the exact use by the others. The precise and clear statement is to be used to interpret the uncertain and not the reverse.

Wesley knew that he wrote rapidly, and, in a letter to Doctor William Dodd, he said: "You and I the more easily bear with each other because we are both of us *rapid* writers, and, therefore, the more liable to mistake." [1]

But, take him altogether, it would be hard to find any one who wrote so much and so long, who was so exact and so consistent with himself, as John Wesley.

[1] *Methodist Magazine*, 1779, p. 475. Tyerman: "Life of Wesley," Vol. II, p. 232.

Usually Wesley adhered tenaciously to what he considered the essential thing while he made modifications in minor matters. Thus all along he emphasized the doctrine of Christian Perfection and strongly presented the duty of Scriptural Sanctification. These words are prominently mentioned in the Bible and involve important Christian and Biblical doctrines. Wesley never abandoned them, or their teaching, but he was not always equally insistent as to certain subordinate questions or minor details connected with them.

Sometimes the emphasis seemed to be placed upon its instantaneousness and sometimes on its gradual attainment, or the possibility thereof, but there never was any question in his mind or his teaching as to there being a religious state called Christian Perfection. With him his phrase about spreading Scriptural Holiness throughout the land, however, meant not so much a theory about holiness, as the life of holiness. With him the holy living was the main thing, and not a mere shibboleth over which men might differ and wrangle with their shibboleth when essentially they meant the very same thing. With Wesley the framing of a statement of a minor detail was not so important as entering into and living the holy life.

Wesley wrote extensively and frequently on this subject. His "Plain Account of Christian Perfection" was circulated widely, but his most condensed, and, we may say, his maturest putting of the matter, was when before the Conference, he examined the candidates for the ministry.

These questions were first used in an early Conference, but they have continued in use ever since.

In these questions it is somewhat remarkable that Mr. Wesley does not use the phrase "Entire Sanctification" or even the word "Sanctification," though he had frequently used the word Sanctification in many other places. The non-use here was possibly because the word sanctification had so many meanings that people were in danger of misusing it by not giving its full meaning, or by not distinguishing between its many meanings, and, so, creating confusion in the minds of others as well as in their own.

At least Wesley limits himself to the word perfection, when he questions the candidates for admission into his Conference. Evidently he did this deliberately, and with a definite purpose, and this condensation of his teaching on this subject deserves most careful study, because it shows how he varied and discriminated in his phrasings of the same thing at different times.

The questions are as follows:

"Have you faith in Christ?

Are you 'going on to perfection?'

Do you expect to be 'perfected in love' in this life?

Are you groaning after it?"[1]

The quotation marks for phrases in the questions, namely "going on to perfection" and "perfected in love," are by Wesley himself.

In studying these questions, it will be noticed, in the first place, that Mr. Wesley avoided starting any controversy in the minds of those who would differ in the use of "Entire Sanctification" or the word sanctification, by not using the words at all, and then simplifies the matter by using and restricting himself to the

[1] General Minutes, Wesley's "Works," Amer. Ed., Vol. V, p. 230.

Scriptural word perfection, which he usually qualified by prefixing the word Christian, thus making it Christian Perfection.

In the second place, it will be noticed that, while using the word perfection, he gives it a brief but comprehensive definition, and his definition of perfection is simply being perfect in love.

In the third place, Wesley, in these questions, plainly teaches that such perfection may be attained in this life, but he does not pause to say just when.

Then, in the fourth place, he presents the duty of seeking this perfection in love, presses the question of expecting to be thus made perfect in this life, and makes his climax by asking whether they are earnestly striving after it, using the quaint and old expression of "groaning after it."

"Groaning after it" did not mean loud ejaculations, or any vocal utterance at all, but the groaning of the soul and the stress of the spirit, and was a strong suggestion of the earnestness of the inner man, but the expression seemed too strong for a later and, perhaps, more fastidious age, and, in 1880, the Methodist Episcopal General Conference changed it to "earnestly striving"—"Are you earnestly striving after it?" but the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, still retains "Are you groaning after it."[1]

Wesley had frequently used the word perfection but this use in the reception of preachers was very succinct and unusually striking. Wesley used the words "perfected in love," but in the Methodist Episcopal Church, in 1788, that was changed to "made perfect"—"made

[1] "Discipline of Church, South," 1914, ¶ 152. "Discipline of Methodist Episcopal Church," 1916, ¶ 162.

perfect in love," which was no improvement, but which makes no practical difference to the average mind.

But this series of three questions stands out as Wesley's simplest and most effective putting of the doctrine of Christian Perfection, and helps to show how Wesley could vary his expression at different times.

However it would not be wise always to infer that because Wesley had modified his verbal expression he had changed his conviction or faith in a doctrine, for, with a different form of words, there might be no change, or no essential change, in his views, or in his teaching, and the verbal variation might be merely for the purpose of expressing his conviction more clearly or concisely.

It is always safest to take Wesley's specific statement or definition on any particular point, as his standard view, and for which he would stand, than a casual remark, perhaps made in haste, and when he was expressing himself generally on another matter. Likewise it is best to select Wesley's shortest and most precise statement of a doctrine, and his briefest and sharpest definition as the key to his meaning.

Take, for example, his condensation of his doctrines that relate to the religious life, when he said: "Our main doctrines, which include all the rest, are repentance, faith, and holiness. The first of these we account, as it were, the porch of religion; the next, the door; the third, religion itself." [1]

Notice how much he packs into this summary. It is his theology in a nutshell.

When one undertakes to interpret John Wesley he should take, first, his specific statements, when he seeks to be exact; and, second, his maturest expressions.

[1] Wesley's "Works," Amer. Ed., Vol. V, p. 333.

XXIII

EFFECTS OF METHODIST DOCTRINES

THE great proof of the possession of power is the demonstration of what it can do by what it has done and now does.

Methodist doctrine can respond instantly to that test. History, and present facts, will show the power in Methodist doctrine by what has been done through the preaching and promulgation of the doctrines of Methodism.

Methodism, in the preaching of its doctrines, has over and over again proven its power to convince men of sin, and its power to win men from sin.

Under preachers, whether scholarly or without scholastic education, the same truth has had the same potent influence. Individual men, and masses of men, have been aroused, and so stirred, that the soul of each one has cried out, "What must I do to be saved?" and under the same Methodist doctrine hosts of human beings, of all classes, have been led to repentance, and the resultant spiritual power has shown itself in transformed lives that manifested a radical moral change and a religious regeneration.

Mighty demonstrations of this marvellous power occurred not only in the early periods of the Wesleyan revival in Europe and America, but down through the succeeding generations, and in almost every part of the world.

The statistics of world-wide Methodism prove most conclusively the power of Wesleyan teaching, and the efficiency of Methodist methods in the use of Methodist doctrine. The adherents of the different Methodistic bodies number millions, but the beneficent influence of Methodism cannot be limited to or measured by the numbers of its direct communicants, and John Richard Green, in his "History of the English People," truthfully declares that "The Methodists themselves were the least result of the Methodist Revival." [1]

How was it that there was such an immediate influence in the preaching, and why was the power so persistent and with such continuous and even increasing potency?

The answer is, first, because of the truth that was preached; and, second, because of the way it was preached. But the manner of the preaching could not do it of itself. Back of that was the doctrine, and it was the doctrine that made the preaching manner.

The doctrine not only reached the individual and the mass, while listening to the truth, but it had power in its general influence to overcome mere external religious formality, and to vivify, and change, the religiously dead to the spiritually living.

It produced those remarkable effects on isolated individuals, on communities, and on ecclesiastical organizations, called Churches. It saved the religious life of the historic Church of England, it revivified the nonconforming Churches of Britain, and, as Isaac Taylor said, prevented England from lapsing into heathenism.

Methodist doctrine had also a profound effect on the

[1] John Richard Green: "History of the English People," New York, Harper & Brothers, Vol. IV, p. 149.

social life of the people. It was felt and seen in the uplift of the lower classes, and among the working classes, as in the case of the Kingswood colliers, and in the case of the Cornwall miners.

Its transforming influence was manifested in all grades of society, and in a marked degree among individuals of the higher and cultured classes, so that it even reached those with lofty titles, and, among its adherents or hearers, it could count those who "wore a coronet and prayed."

It carried even political blessing and saved England from duplicating the horrors of the French Revolution, and made a new England, as an honored historian has said that England, as we know her, is the result of Methodism.

In America it did a marvellous pioneer work. It followed the advancing population as it pushed through the forest, forded the rivers and crossed mountain ranges, and found the scattered settlers, and then evangelized them, instructed them, saved them to Christianity, and organized them into Churches, and the theology of Methodism was the impelling force. Methodism saved men from sin and for Christian society. It laid the foundations of empires, and its many millions of members and its many Christian institutions the world over prove the tremendous and sustained power of the doctrines of Methodism.

As Bishop E. R. Hendrix, of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, has said:

"The mighty reformation in morals ever attending Methodist preaching was due to the convictions produced by Methodist doctrine. The kingdom of God was within, a kingdom of righteousness and joy in the

Holy Ghost, before it became one in outward organization and form." [1]

"The new religious history of many a town, or even commonwealth, dates from their ministry" (the consecrated Methodist itinerants). "But at bottom the secret of such efficient work in the moral and spiritual spheres is that Methodism is really and deeply a movement within the sphere of doctrine. Definite preaching of vital doctrines of the gospel has made possible the great influence of Methodism in the life of the individual or of the community." [2]

"A reformation of doctrine has always preceded one of morals. Unless men have adequate motives for such a change, motives founded in profound convictions of great truths, they never cry: 'What must I do to be saved?' Great evangelists like Edwards and Finney, who made sinners tremble, are great preachers of fundamental doctrines, as were John the Baptist and Jesus. The messages from such lips declare: 'Ye must be born again.'" [3]

Again Bishop Hendrix remarks that

"Too often Methodism has been praised as the great moral and religious force which saved the Church of England and quickened the spiritual life of all the Churches, leaving out of account the great but simple doctrines with which she wrought her great work." [4]

The doctrines were the great agencies.

Again and again Bishop Hendrix emphasizes the necessity of Methodist doctrine to produce such results,

[1] Bishop Hendrix, *Methodist Review* (Church South), April, 1907.

[2] Bishop Hendrix, *Methodist Quarterly Review* (Methodist Episcopal Church, South), April, 1907.

[3] *Ibid.* [4] *Ibid.*

and points to the effectiveness of the early methods. Thus he says:

"When the senior preacher indoctrinated his junior and associate with the great beliefs of Methodism, there was found an unequaled school of theology. There was handed down 'the form of sound words' such as Paul gave to Timothy. Thus there was a spoken gospel before there was a written gospel. Mr. Wesley, however, felt the need of putting his doctrinal teachings into written language that they might be carefully studied. Hence the care with which he discussed various doctrines for which Methodism stood. The careful study of Wesley and Watson helped to make the great doctrinal preachers of a century ago, and gave Methodism the ear of two nations."[1]

One of the most remarkable things to be remembered is the effect Methodist doctrines have had on other doctrinal beliefs. As to this consider especially its effect upon extreme Calvinistic teachings.

When Methodism arose, which was before the middle of the eighteenth century, Calvinism was the dominant creed among the Protestant Churches both in Europe and North America. It was quite universal in Scotland, it was predominant in the State Church of England, and also in the Independent Churches in England and America, and throughout the Reformed Churches of Continental Europe.

Methodism at once made an attack, and entered into a conflict with these extreme views, and from it never retired. It met with sturdy opposition and most bitter antagonism, but it never retreated and never flinched.

[1] Bishop Hendrix, *Methodist Quarterly Review* (Methodist Episcopal Church, South), April, 1907.

Its battle cry was "A free salvation for all who will seek and accept it, according to God's conditions," and it dashed forward, ringing the changes on "Whosoever will may come," and it went on and on ever winning great and greater victories.

Methodism soon convinced the world not only that it was a religion, or a new exposition of old Christianity, but that it was also a vital philosophy.

It preached the philosophy of the freedom of the human will, and showed its harmony with the teaching of the Scriptures, and Methodism's philosophy became the philosophy of the thinking world, the scholarly world, and the world of the humblest as well.

It taught that God doomed no man without giving him a fair chance, but that there was salvation for all who would meet the conditions, and every one could. "Ye will not come unto me," said Jesus, and Methodism said: "Whosoever will may come," and assured humanity that, through God's grace, every human being who chooses the salvation and meets the conditions, which every one can meet, will be saved, and this doctrine, and this philosophy of the freedom of the will, won the battle, and extreme Calvinism went down in defeat before this doctrine and philosophy of free will and free salvation.

As Bishop Hendrix has said:

"The early history of Methodism was one of doctrinal controversy. Its literature was one of doctrinal tracts. Pamphlets, 'Checks,' 'Letters,' were freely preached on both sides of the Atlantic in the first hundred years of Methodism by such saints as Wesley and Fletcher and Benson and Fisk.

"Their doctrines were attacked wherever they went

by Antinomians who rejected the moral law as no longer binding on Christians, due to ultra-Calvinism that prevailed on both sides of the Atlantic, and by Universalists who, shocked by the doctrine of reprobation, would pervert the Methodist doctrine of a universal atonement.

"The Methodist doctrine of a universal atonement was to be the great corrective, on the one hand, of the Pelagian doctrine which denied any need of atonement because there was no Adamic fall or universal depravity of the race, and was to guard, on the other hand, against the extreme of Augustinian teaching, that every soul was guilty of Adam's sin, with an implied guilt of all ancestral sins in the long line of descent. It is this fearful doctrine of Augustine that led to the doctrine of baptismal regeneration both of adults and infants as the only corrective of such inherited guilt, and which made so necessary officiating priests, resulting in the Roman hierarchy. Methodism came to the rescue by her clear statement of belief that no soul can suffer the final penal doom of sin because one's ancestors sinned, but only for his own perversity and sin. Because there is a universal atonement, there is universal grace. The soul gains in Christ all that it lost in Adam, and more, despite its corrupt nature. The atonement in Christ is sufficient for the salvation of all, but the actual salvation is conditioned on repentance and faith, both of which are possible through grace. The helpless soul receives helping grace." [1]

Here we should quote the testimony of one who was not a Methodist but, though belonging to another de-

[1] Bishop Hendrix, *Methodist Quarterly Review* (Methodist Episcopal Church), April, 1907.

nomination, had, with an open and scholarly mind, carefully studied the Methodist movement. We refer to Professor Austin Phelps, D. D., LL. D., of Andover, who, in his work: "My Note-Book, Fragmentary Studies in Theology," written in 1890, a short time before he died, devoted a whole chapter to "Methodism—Its Work and its Ways." In it he tells not only of Methodism but of its effect on New England and its type of Calvinism. In it he says:

"The Methodist Episcopal Church is a striking illustration of the principle that every great sect is built on a necessity. It comes into being because it must come.

"The rise of Methodism was the birth of a spiritual reform of which all the Christian denominations in Great Britain and America were in desperate need. The Established Churches of England and Scotland were dying of spiritual *anæmia*. . . Never before, nor since, has the phenomenon been so signally developed, of Christianity gasping in the struggle to live on the religion of Nature. The religion of the realm was Christianity without Christ. . .

"The chief power in saving to the future the old Church of Cranmer and Ridley was the Methodist revival. It broke upon the kingdom in tongues of flame. . . . The Church of England could no more withstand it than she could have withstood the day of judgment. To her it was the day of judgment, but for the 'remnant which was left' within her pale which recognized the voice of a prophet. English Christianity has never lost the elements of spiritual life which Methodism, by direct reproof and by the power of contrast, then put into it. Methodism saved the Anglican Church from extinction. It was a re-

enforcement of apostolic Christianity, also, in every other Christian denomination in the English-speaking nations and colonies. . . .

"Methodism has done for the Christian world another service. She has contributed improvements of inestimable value to the popular theology. . . To the theology of the people its pulpit has done good, knightly service. It has been a stout ally of those who have labored to eliminate from the popular notion of Christianity the fictions of limited atonement and the servitude of the human will. Before the advent of Methodism these dogmas, to the majority of minds which came under their influence, had made salvation an impracticable business. . . . In many pulpits the preaching of repentance to unregenerate men had absolutely ceased. Logical minds holding those dogmas could not preach it. . . . To preach repentance as a duty to men who could not repent, and who until they did could have no assurance that the sacrifice of Christ had any concern with them, was an insult to the bearer and stultification to the preacher. . . .

"Methodism cut the knot. Wesley and his associates denied the limitation of the atoning sacrifice by divine decree. They did it in no obscure or silken speech. They denounced the dogma with vehemence and scorn. They defied it as an invention of the devil. Indeed, throughout the controversy with Calvinism, Wesley was a savage. He spared neither foe nor friend, not even Whitefield. He gave us the iron hand bare of the velvet glove. But his unkempt ferocity of method achieved its object. It said what he meant, and hewed the way clean to the liberty of proclaiming a free salvation. That he and his successors flung broadcast.

They preached it exultingly. They preached it like freeborn men. It gave the ring of gladness to their ministrations. The mountains skipped like rams, and the little hills like lambs, at the sound of their voices.

"There was an electric spring to conquest in the Gospel as they projected it upon the quivering sensibilities of men, which made it seem to them a novelty. The immense assemblies in the fields, when they listened to the impassioned harangues of Whitefield and Wesley, seemed to themselves to hear the word of God for the first time. Then, first, the offer of salvation meant something to them. Men and women who, all their lives, had been droning the confession that they were 'miserable sinners,' not believing a word of it, suddenly found out that it was a fact. Sermons, as they heard them, were full of personal allusions. Then Christ became to them a necessity; and because a necessity, a reality. The sympathy of numbers redoubled the force of the convictions which sprung up in the soul of every one. Light shone reflected from a thousand mirrors. The Day of Pentecost dawned again.

"No other truth so vital to spiritual religion has had so painful a birth as this of human freedom in the act of repentance. Augustine and his predecessors paganized Christianity in this respect for a thousand years. The reformers left the truth substantially as they found it. Calvinism, as defined in the Genevan and Scotch theologies, and in the Thirty-nine Articles of the Anglican Church as well, was dead fatalism. The popular mind could not logically get anything better from it. The offer of salvation, loaded with the doctrine of inability, meant no more to multitudes of hearers than 'Selah' did in the old editions of the

Psalms. The struggles of the Calvinistic mind to rid itself of the incubus have not been a brilliant success. Ability to obey God has been sometimes denied and affirmed in the same creed. Scores of sermons have been made a shuttlecock of it. Forth and back and forth again it has been knocked about, till it has fallen to the ground through sheer exhaustion in the hand which has held the battledoor. Never a man has been the wiser.

"We have reason to be grateful to any embodiment of Christian thought, or enterprise, which has helped us ever so infirmly to rescue such a truth from its tribulations, and restore it to its place as a power of spiritual life.

"This Methodism has done for the doctrine of human freedom, through the whole of her splendid history."[1]

This is a great tribute to the intellectual power of Methodist doctrine from a great and unprejudiced and most intellectual observer.

On this great philosophico-religious issue, Methodism won a wonderful victory over the popular mind, but it went beyond that and convinced and converted the learned theologians on the other side.

Here and there and everywhere it won leading scholars, and individual men who were leaders in other theological groups, but, even more than that, it changed the views of great Calvinistic Churches, and they in turn passed explanations to qualify their old Calvinian teachings.

When, in 1883, the National Council of the Congregational Churches of the United States of America

[1] Austin Phelps, D. D., LL. D.: "My Note-Book," New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1891, pp. 275–285.

published its new Creed, there had disappeared from their formulation the fatalistic and extreme Calvinistic teachings to which were largely due the rise and progress of Unitarianism and Universalism in New England.

The following extracts are from the report on The Creed in 1883:

"I. We believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible;

"And in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who is of one substance with the Father; by whom all things were made;

"And in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and Giver of life, who is sent from the Father and Son, and who together with the Father and Son is worshiped and glorified.

"II. We believe that the Providence of God, by which he executes his eternal purposes in the government of the world, is in and over all events; yet so that the freedom and responsibility of man are not impaired, and sin is the act of the creature alone.

"III. We believe that man was made in the image of God, that he might know, love, and obey God, and enjoy him forever; that our first parents by disobedience fell under the righteous condemnation of God; and that all men are so alienated from God that there is no salvation from the guilt and power of sin except through God's redeeming grace.

"IV We believe that God would have all men return to him; that to this end he has made himself known, not only through the works of nature, the course of his providence, and the consciences of men, but also through supernatural revelations made especially to a chosen people, and above all, when the

fulness of time was come, through Jesus Christ his Son.

"V. We believe that the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are the record of God's revelation of himself in the work of redemption; that they were written by men under the special guidance of the Holy Spirit; that they are able to make wise unto salvation; and that they constitute the authoritative standard by which religious teaching and human conduct are to be regulated and judged.

"VI. We believe that the love of God to sinful men has found its highest expression in the redemptive work of his Son; who became man, uniting his divine nature with our human nature in one person; who was tempted like other men, yet without sin; who, by his humiliation, his holy obedience, his sufferings, his death on the cross, and his resurrection, became a perfect Redeemer; whose sacrifice of himself for the sins of the world declares the righteousness of God, and is the sole and sufficient ground of forgiveness and of reconciliation with him.

"VII. We believe that Jesus Christ, after he had risen from the dead, ascended into heaven, where, as the one Mediator between God and man, he carries forward his work of saving men; that he sends the Holy Spirit to convict them of sin, and to lead them to repentance and faith; and that those who through renewing grace turn to righteousness, and trust in Jesus Christ as their Redeemer, receive for his sake the forgiveness of their sins, and are made the Children of God." Etc.

Even in stalwart Scotland the Calvinistic bodies were gradually impressed, and, in 1892, about two years

after the decease of Professor Phelps, the Free Church of Scotland passed its epoch-marking deliverance called "The Declaratory Act."

This act said:

"The General Assembly with consent of Presbyteries declare as follows:

"That in holding and teaching according to the Confession, the Divine purpose of grace toward those who are saved, and the execution of that purpose in time, this Church most earnestly proclaims as standing in the forefront of the revelation of grace, the love of God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, to sinners of mankind, manifested especially in the Father's gift of the Son to be the Saviour of the world, in the coming of the Son to offer himself a propitiation for sin, and in the striving of the Holy Spirit with men to bring them to repentance.

"That this Church also holds that all who hear the gospel are warranted and required to believe to the saving of their souls; that in the case of such as do not believe, but perish in their sins, the issue is due to their own rejection of the gospel call; and that this Church does not teach, and does not regard the Confession as teaching, the foreordination of men to death, irrespective of their own sin.

"That it is the duty of those who believe, and one end of their calling by God, to make known the gospel to all men everywhere for the obedience of faith. And that while the gospel is the ordinary means of salvation for those to whom it is made known, yet it does not follow, nor is the Confession to be held as teaching, that any who die in infancy are lost, or that God may not extend his mercy, for Christ's sake, and by his

Holy Spirit, to those who are beyond the reach of these means, as it may seem good to him, according to the riches of his grace."

Who could imagine such a declaration from Scotch Calvinists before Britain had the teachings of Wesleyan Arminians! In it the influence of Wesleyan Arminianism is plainly seen. But it had such a bearing on the great property case a few years ago that the Lord Chancellor and the other Law Lords in England ruled in favor of what are sometimes called the "Wee Frees" as holding unabated predestination, which the declaratory act got rid of. But it is said that after the decision even the "Wee Frees" wished to be known as not supporting old-fashioned predestinarianism.

Then the great Presbyterian Church in the United States of America concluded that it would be judicious to qualify certain expressions in its "Confession of Faith."

In the confession appeared the following:

Chapter III, "Of God's Eternal Decree," opening with the declaration that "God from all eternity did by the most wise and holy counsel of his own will, freely and unchangeably ordain whatever comes to pass; yet so as thereby neither is God the author of sin, nor is violence offered to the will of the creatures, nor is the liberty or contingency of second causes taken away, but rather established." Then follow other declarations among which are the following: "By the decree of God, for the manifestation of his glory, some men and angels are predestinated unto everlasting life, and others fore-ordained to everlasting death. These angels and men, thus predestinated and fore-ordained, are particularly and unchangeably designed; and their

number is so certain and definite that it cannot be either increased or diminished;" "As God hath appointed the elect unto glory, so hath he, by the eternal and most free purpose of his will, fore-ordained all the means thereunto. Wherefore they who are elected being fallen in Adam, are redeemed by Christ, are effectually called unto faith in Christ by his spirit working in due season; are justified, adopted, sanctified, and kept by his power through faith unto salvation. Neither are any other redeemed by Christ, effectually called, justified, adopted, sanctified, and saved, but the elect only."

Then Section 3, of Chapter X, read: "Elect infants, dying in infancy, are regenerated and saved by Christ through the Spirit who worketh, when and where, and how he pleaseth. So also are all other elect persons, who are incapable of being outwardly called by the ministry of the Word."

These and other declarations written long years before by learned Calvinistic divines have been points around which battles innumerable had been waged, and particularly since Methodism arose. Its simple, practical, and direct method of presenting a free salvation and the freedom of the human will gradually but effectually broke down the scholastic expressions of extreme Calvinism, and more completely than the scholarly Dutch Arminianism ever was able to do.

The stalwart Presbyterian Church in the United States not only felt the need of modifying in some way the old Calvinistic expressions, but in the course of years decided that it must give a new definition that would qualify certain Calvinistic declarations.

In 1902–03, this great Church added to the Confes-

sion of Faith two chapters, one "Of the Holy Spirit," and the other "Of the Love of God and Missions," for the purpose of expressing "more fully the doctrine of the Church concerning the Holy Spirit, Missions, and the love of God for all men."

Among other things Chapter XXXIV says of the Holy Spirit: "He is the Lord and Giver of life, everywhere present in nature, and is the source of all good thoughts, pure desires, and holy counsels in Men. By Him the Prophets were moved to speak the Word of God, and all writers of the Holy Scriptures inspired to record infallibly the mind and will of God. The dispensation of the Gospel is especially committed to Him. He prepares the way for it, accompanies it with His persuasive power, and urges its message upon the reason and conscience of men, so that they who reject its merciful offer are not only without excuse, but are also guilty of resisting the Holy Spirit.

"The Holy Spirit, whom the Father is ever willing to give to all who ask Him, is the only efficient agent in the application of Redemption. He convicts men of sin, moves them to repentance, regenerates them by His grace, and persuades and enables them to embrace Jesus Christ by faith," etc.

In the other new chapter, the XXXVth, it is said: "God, in infinite and perfect love, having provided in the covenant of grace, through the mediation and sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ, a way of life and salvation, sufficient for and adapted to the whole lost race of man, doth freely offer this salvation to all men in the Gospel.

"In the Gospel God declares His love for the world and His desire that all men should be saved, reveals

fully and clearly the only way of salvation; promises eternal life to all who truly repent and believe in Christ; invites and commands all to embrace the offered mercy; and by His spirit accompanying the Word pleads with men to accept His gracious invitation," etc.

In addition, at the same time, the Presbyterian Church drew up and adopted what it called a "Declaratory Statement," in which it says:

"Seeing that the desire has been formally expressed for a disavowal by the Church of certain inferences drawn from statements in the Confession of Faith, and also for a declaration of certain aspects of revealed truth which appear at the present time to call for more explicit statement, therefore the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America does authoritatively declare as follows:

"*First*, With reference to Chapter III of the Confession of Faith: that concerning those who are saved in Christ, the doctrine of God's eternal decree is held in harmony with the doctrine of His love to all mankind, His Gift of His Son to be the propitiation for the sins of the whole world, and His readiness to bestow His saving grace on all who seek it. That concerning those who perish, the doctrine of God's eternal decree is held in harmony with the doctrine that God desires not the death of any sinner, but has provided in Christ a salvation sufficient for all, adapted to all, and freely offered in the Gospel to all; that men are fully responsible for their treatment of God's gracious offer; that His decree hinders no man from accepting that offer; and that no man is condemned except on the ground of his sin.

"*Second*, With reference to Chapter X, Section 3, of

the Confession of Faith, that it is not to be regarded as teaching that any who die in infancy are lost. We believe that all dying in infancy are included in the election of grace, and are regenerated and saved by Christ through the Spirit, who works when and where and how He pleases." [1]

All this modification was due more to Wesleyan Arminianism than to any other influence.

Doctrines that have had such intellectual potency as to radically revolutionize long established theological systems, and the accepted philosophy of great Churches, by causing their supporters to see the truth and accept the very teachings they had antagonized, must have been most potent doctrines.

Doctrines that induced the thousands and the millions to turn from sin and seek the holy life, that uplifted individuals and communities, and gave men a new and better view of God, and a loftier and more inspiring view of this life and of the life to come, must have had in them the real truth, and the truth that humanity needs.

Wesleyan doctrines had, and have, did do and are doing, all these things, and they are the needed and winning doctrines that mankind cannot spare.

[1] "Confession of Faith of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America," Philadelphia, 1912.

XXIV

ARE NEW STANDARDS NEEDED?

ARE new doctrinal standards needed for Methodism? Doubtless the question will surprise and perplex many minds. They have never raised the question and cannot understand why it should be raised by anybody. Yet the question has been mooted at least by a few.

But why should any one start the inquiry? Standards of doctrine are to the faith of the Church somewhat of the nature of a national Constitution to the country, and both should have a certain degree of permanence and, therefore, neither should be disturbed unless some very serious reason demands it.

Then the faith of the Church is much more important than the polity of the Church or the government of a people and should not be treated as temporary or as something that could be easily unsettled, and, therefore, the fixed expressions of that faith should not be changed unless there is a most profound necessity.

Still there may arise conditions under which it might not be improper to inquire as to whether there was any absolute necessity for revising the doctrinal formularies of a Church.

If, for example, it was discovered that the statements of doctrine were false, that would be a good reason for correcting them. But if the standards of doctrine in Methodism were true when they were made and adopted, have they ceased to be true? If the doctrines

were true in the eighteenth century why are they not true in the twentieth? If they were true then do they not continue to express the truth? If they were true when they were made they must still be true, for the Bible remains the same and human nature is the same, and, if they still remain true, then, on this ground, there is no reason, good or bad, why the standard expressions of faith should be changed.

If the question relates to the literary form of the standards, then in turn it may be asked whether, even if the literary form might be criticized in some particular, that is a sufficient reason for changing the verbal form of such vitally important documents. Literary expressions and arrangements may be largely matters of taste and one or the other form might answer practically the same purpose, and, hence, there might be no practical gain in disturbing familiar expressions and substituting those that were merely different.

Further the English language in which the standards were written is essentially the same as it is to-day, and there is not an essential word in the standards that cannot be understood by any ordinarily intelligent reader of English in this generation.

That being the case one may insist upon knowing why any one proposes to change the language of the standards. Some may even raise a question as to the motive back of the desire, and, doubtless, some may fear that the intention is not only to change the expressions but also to make them mean something else than they now do, or to get rid of some particular exposition or doctrinal definition and in that way destroy some doctrine.

If, then, the doctrines remain true, and the literary

form can be understood, and is sufficient for all practical purposes, it will be exceedingly difficult to persuade a whole denomination that the standards of doctrine should be changed in any way or in any degree, and, especially because of the possible uncertainty of motive, and the uncertainty of the outcome.

Again it may be asked are not the standards of doctrine sufficiently broad in their scope? Are the doctrines as presented in all the standards sufficiently comprehensive? Do they not present the fundamentals of Christianity and touch the essentials of Christian belief? What essential is not presented? It cannot be named. Then nothing essential is lacking.

If it be said that some things are not mentioned in the Articles of Religion, then it may be answered that the Articles are not all the standards. There are the Apostles' Creed, Wesley's Fifty-two Sermons, Wesley's Notes on the New Testament, and the Ritual. If the point in question is not in the Articles of Religion, it may be found in one, or more, of the other standards, and, perhaps, treated differently from what it could be in the Article form.

Further, the standards of doctrine are not only comprehensive, but they are also comprehensible. They embrace the essentials and they can be understood.

That is plain, because at the beginning and for more than a century and three-quarters they have been understood by all classes, by the illiterate as well as by the highly educated, and not only by their friends but also by their foes. The plain man has found them simple enough for him and the scholar has found them both profound and clear enough for him, because they are written in plain but excellent English. The method

of treatment and the language used make them understandable to all.

To suggest that one cannot know what Wesley means from his writings would suggest on the part of the objector a peculiar obtuseness, or a decided ignorance of these writings, for Wesley's English is remarkably clear, compact, and easily understood.

From the very beginning his doctrines were easily comprehended by the miners of Kingswood and Cornwall, and as well by the miscellaneous crowds on the London Moors, as by the scholarly students and learned professors when he preached at Saint Mary's in Oxford.

It may be objected that the standards contain much that belongs to general Christendom rather than to that which is peculiar to Methodism. If that is true, there is no point in the objection, for general Christian truth must have great value. If it be true it does not prove that such contents in the standards do not rightfully belong to Methodism. If certain symbols belong to common Christianity, then when Methodism adopts them they belong to Methodism which is a part of general Christendom.

Further Methodism is not something distinct from Christianity but is Christian, and all that belongs to Christianity belongs to it. Methodism is a part of the general Christian Church, and has a right to and needs everything that is Christian, and needs and has a right to these particular things just as much as any other branch of the Church of Christ.

In other words, Methodism does not claim to be different from general or essential Christianity, but to be in harmony therewith, and to be a part thereof, and, therefore, it must recognize and has recognized general

Christian truths, incorporated them in its organic life, and proclaimed them as of its standards of doctrine. This it had a right to do, and had to do, if it would be a Christian Church and an exponent of Christian truth.

So Methodism does not profess anything that is un-Christian or non-Christian, but sought that which was Christian and Scriptural, and nothing is foreign to it which is truly Christian.

John Wesley was not seeking new doctrines but the truth, and he wanted no newer doctrines than those in the teachings of Jesus and the writings in the New Testament. His appeal was always to the Scriptures and he willingly accepted the historic formulations in harmony therewith. He recognized the desirability of preserving crystallized truth in the forms approved by the ages, for they come down after having been tested and having received the endorsement of these ages, but he was quick in his excision of that which in his judgment could not stand the test of Scripture and reason.

Because some other Church, or the general Church held to some particular truth was no reason for its rejection by Methodism, but, if it was a truth of general Christianity, that was a sufficient reason for Methodism having it, for Methodism was a part of the general Church.

Then there was another value in these old formulations in that they, for example, the Articles of Religion, and the Apostles' Creed, linked Methodism most manifestly with the general and historic Christian Church of all the Christian ages, to which it belonged by tradition, historic descent, and by every manner of right.

It may be suggested that the doctrines in the standards are so scattered among the several standards, that the doctrines of Methodism are difficult to ascertain.

But surely that cannot be said of the Articles of Religion, for they stand together and are compact, and, under their specific headings, it is easy to find any particular doctrine, while the language is so lucid that any ordinary mind can understand what they mean to convey, and the same is true of the Apostles' Creed, and, as another of the actual standards of Methodism, we may add the Lord's Prayer.

Certainly the Articles of Religion and the Apostles' Creed, as compact formulations of Christian and Methodistic doctrine, bring the doctrinal statements close together, and are fairly clear, so that these standards at least may be understood.

If it be meant that the distinctively Methodist doctrines are hard to ascertain, then it must again be asserted that the Twenty-five Articles of Religion, and the Apostles' Creed are distinctively Methodist doctrines, having been duly adopted as such by the Methodists.

But if it be urged that what is meant is that the Methodistic doctrines contained in Wesley's Sermons, in his Notes on the New Testament, and the doctrinal formulations in the old Conference Minutes are hard to discover and difficult to understand, then there may be an issue, but the issue at once melts into thin air.

Doctrines in discourses, or in general literature, may easily be detected and understood. Thus Swedenborgians profess to understand their doctrines which are embedded in the writings of Emanuel Swedenborg, and the Calvinists have no doubt they know what is Calvinism from the writings of the great John Calvin. Why not then know Wesleyanism from the writings of John Wesley?

What difficulty should there be in finding out the doctrines in Wesley's Sermons, when the title or theme is printed above the sermon, when the text is given, and the discussion proceeds with analysis and argument in the clearest language? It ought indeed to be more easily understood than the very condensed statement in an article of religion.

Or what difficulty can there be in knowing what doctrines are taught in the "Notes on the New Testament," when one turning to any passage will find the clear-cut comment printed directly with the Scripture passage.

Then the doctrinal statements in the early Conference Minutes, arranged in the form of question and answer, could not be plainer.

A consideration of these characteristics is enough to make one think that the difficulty in ascertaining the doctrines from the standards must be an imagination, or the party making the objection is not well acquainted with the standards themselves, or he is a mere objector who delights to cavil.

Referring to Wesley's Sermons and Notes, Doctor Burwash, of Canada, has some very pertinent observations. Thus he says:

"Turning our attention to the sermons, we note the important fact that they exhibit the actual preaching of original Methodism. They were not prepared as a text-book for students, or a catechism for scholars, nor as a series of theological propositions for controversial discussion, but as an exhibition to the world of a *preached gospel*."[1]

[1] Rev. N. Burwash, S. T. D.: Introduction to Wesley's Sermons, Toronto, 1909, p. xv.

Later, Doctor Burwash adds: "Finally in the study of these documents, it must be borne in mind that they were proposed as standards of *preaching*. That which was to be tested by them was the *pulpit in every Methodist Church*. This was to be *the type of preaching for which these houses were erected*. The relation in which Methodism stood to the Established Church in England, during Mr. Wesley's life, provided for the doctrinal unity of Methodism with the Protestant Reformation. When, in the United States of America, Methodism became an independent Church, the same provision was made by the abridged and amended Articles of Religion. But the introduction of the Sermons and Notes, as the standard of preaching, into every Trust Deed of a chapel or church in the Connexion, assured as far as human means can do so, an Arminian evangelical preaching and exposition of God's Word for all time.

"To interpret these standards or apply them after the manner of Articles of Religion, or Creeds, or Confessions of Faith, which categorically define the doctrines to be professed or believed, would be contrary to their very nature. *It is to the spirit and type of this preaching that our obligations bind us.*"[1]

Perhaps Professor Burwash may seem in these remarks to overlook the stress that should be placed on the doctrinal value of these sermons but that is not his intention, and even in this quotation he says the Sermons and Notes "assured" "Arminian evangelical preaching and exposition as of God's Word for all time," and elsewhere he refers to them as "standards of doctrine," but here he is placing special emphasis on the sermons as standards or models of preaching, but

[1] Burwash: Introduction, p. xviii.

that meant that they were standards of what should be preached, that is to say the doctrines as well as the form and manner.

Again, referring to erroneous doctrines, which were exposed and answered in Wesley's sermons, Doctor Burwash says: "But in their opposition to all these things, the sermons did not cease to be sermons. They maintained their *practical* and *spiritual* character, and aimed only and directly at the extension and perfection of the religious life.

"Another cause which prevented this controversial aspect of the sermons from marring their perfection as standards of doctrine for all time, was the fact that the essential principles of these controversies belong to all time. They are as old as the days of Paul, and have repeated themselves in every subsequent age of the Church's history. It was therefore absolutely necessary that standards of doctrine should give no uncertain sound in regard to the questions herein involved." [1]

So the sermons were standards of doctrine and the sermonic form made them peculiarly potent and the doctrines the more easily understood. While in sermonic form yet they are not diffuse, as in the case of many actual sermons for delivery, but, on the contrary, Wesley's sermons are highly condensed, as might be a pretty full outline as a basis for actual preaching, and this was said to be the fact in the case of quite a number of the printed discourses of John Wesley.

Doctor Burwash, for himself, seems to positively prefer "the simpler form of a *standard of preaching*," to "a standard of scientific, dogmatic teaching," though

[1] Burwash: Introduction, pp. xvii, xviii.

he admits the value of the latter. To him the sermonic presentations are "proper distinctive symbols," and he proceeds to say: "We are disposed to maintain that the 'Sermons and Notes' were the natural form of standard for a Church originating as did Methodism, not out of dogmatic disputations, but out of a glorious era of *gospel preaching;* and, further, that they are the Apostolic and primitive form of standard. And if this form is natural, it is truly scientific, as all things natural are. All that is required is that we discover the law of its growth, which is also the law of its exposition and logical unity; and then what has seemed to be an unscientific medley of disconnected truths stands forth as a beautifully proportioned and perfect body of divinity." [1]

Notwithstanding the standards of doctrine exist in more than one form, students have found no difficulty in discovering in them a definite and harmonious system of theology. On these standards long years ago Richard Watson, one of British Methodism's ablest and most scholarly ministers, based his Theological Institutes which performed a great work in systematizing the Wesleyan doctrines in the minds of preachers and people.

Other great theologians of Methodism have followed in Watson's steps and in their writings have revealed that the Wesleyan Standards contain, as Professor Burwash has said, "a beautifully proportioned and perfect body of divinity."

That the standards exist in at least three different forms does not render the ascertainment of the doctrines more difficult, but, on the contrary, makes it

[1] Burwash: Introduction, pp. ix, x.

simpler and more certain as one standard throws light on another, and each on all and all on each.

Methodist doctrines have been accessible. Men have found them, and competent men have assembled them, and on them have written illuminating expositions, both brief and elaborate.

Individuals have also undertaken to give condensations and explanations of certain phases of Methodist doctrine from their own view-point. Thus, to take an example, the Reverend Professor John Miley, D. D., in his fraternal address before the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, at Richmond, Virginia, in 1886, said:

"Methodism holds a profoundly modified anthropology. This is clearly true, while it must be admitted that some of the stronger views of Augustine appear in our earlier literature on the doctrine. This is the case, however, only when the question is treated in isolation from the atonement, and never so when treated in its proper connection with this great truth. Whoever understands the doctrine of Methodism well knows that her doctrine of original sin is largely modified by her doctrine of a universal grace through a universal atonement. We have ever held firmly and fully the doctrine of a common native depravity as consequent to the Adamic fall; that this depravity is in itself a moral ruin; that there is no power in us by nature unto a good life. Some have held the imputation of Adam's sin to the race, and also the demerit of each, on the ground of inherited depravity. But such have not failed to set over against these forms of sin a free justification, so that such sin is rather hypothetic than real—only what would be if there were no atonement. The

common doctrine is that merely on such grounds no soul can justly suffer the final penal doom of sin. An absolute moral helplessness is with us only hypothetically true. Such helplessness is naturally consequent to the common native depravity; but no soul, except for his own moral perversity, is ever left to this natural consequence. It is just here that our doctrine of the atonement so greatly modifies our anthropology and marks its distinction from the Augustinian. Through a universal atonement there is universal grace—the light and help of the Spirit in every soul. If we were born with a corrupt nature in descent from Adam, we take our existence under an economy of redemption, with a measure of the grace of Christ. With such grace, which shall not lack increase on its use, we may turn unto the Lord and be saved. This doctrine is in all our written theology, and ever rings out from our many pulpits.

"There are distinctive elements in our doctrine of atonement, as already indicated in part. We utterly reject the mere moral sense of the atonement. On the other hand, we do not hold an absolute substitution of Christ in precept and penalty, so that all whom he redeemed must be saved. Such a substitution goes with a limited atonement, but is inconsistent with its universality. No truth of our doctrine stands out more distinctly than this universality. Hence, in the requirement of consistency, as on the ground of Scripture, we hold the conditionality of its saving grace. We hold a provisory substitution in atonement which is sufficient for the salvation of all, but leaves the actual salvation truly conditional.

"Regeneration has no clearer treatment than in

Methodism. Its necessity requires the fullest expression. The impotence of all external means and human agency for its effectuation is equally affirmed. The immediate agency of the Holy Spirit in the work of regeneration we have ever most fully preached. The profound reality of this work, which transforms the soul into the image of God, is ever in this preaching. Regeneration in the sense of this doctrine is no prolonged and hidden process without any manifest outcome, but an instant work of the Holy Spirit which reveals itself in personal consciousness. This clear treatment of the doctrine was greatly needed at the rise of Methodism, and with its exemplification in so many experiences was of great value.

"The direct witness of the Spirit to the gracious sonship thus initiated, so distinctive of early Methodism, and no less so now only because so common with other Churches, was but the next and the sure step. In the deepest truth of our theology, and as deep as in that of any other school, the ground of salvation is in the blood of the atonement and its efficient agency in the power of the Holy Spirit. As there is no limitation of sufficiency in either, there must be the possibility of a full salvation; and if for the present we may omit all technical distinctions, the fullness of salvation is the fullness of sanctification. This doctrine is therefore no alien element in our theology, but simply a completing truth of the salvation which we preach."

This is a little illustration of how a theological investigator can find and elucidate doctrines on important points notwithstanding three separate standard forms.

From the very early years of the Wesleyan move-

ment Methodism had an easily recognized system of doctrine, that people of all classes soon spoke of as Methodistic. It was understood at the beginning and it has been understood ever since.

The itinerant preachers proclaimed it with clearness, power, and general consistency. They had Wesley's Sermons, Wesley's Notes, and the early Conference Minutes, and from them, without difficulty, they discerned Wesley's doctrines, which were the standard doctrines of Methodism, and so, their teaching had a common harmony.

The system of doctrine was distinctly understood by the people, plain or cultured, who heard these preachers. The doctrines were so easily found in the standards which were widely circulated that a "wayfaring man though a fool need not err therein," and even the plainest people could and did discuss them among themselves and with others. Never, from the beginning, has it been difficult to ascertain from the standards the doctrines of Methodism. To say the contrary would indicate that the individual had not carefully consulted the standards, and did not know how quickly and easily the people understood.

The Wesleyan doctrines have been known throughout the generations. Somehow they have been found and comprehended. They have been preached for about one hundred and eighty years or more, for Wesley preached his views before he formed his initial and regular Society in London, that is before the latter part of 1739.

The doctrines, therefore, were and are ascertainable, no matter what may be the form of the standards. The doctrines can be found for they have been found.

If these doctrines have been preached, at least within a score of two hundred years, then they have been found all along these years, and, with the same sources, they still are findable, and looking for them is not "like looking for a needle in a haystack."

To say that one cannot find, or cannot easily find, these doctrines in Wesley's Fifty-two Sermons, his Notes on the New Testament, and in the Twenty-five Articles of Religion, is, we repeat, to say that the individual who has made search and has not found them lacks ordinary ability, or cannot be familiar with the discourses and the other standards.

One may easily find out through these standards what is taught as to God, Christ, and the Divine Spirit; what is taught as to Divine revelation and the Scriptures; what is meant by sin and salvation; and what is meant by repentance, justification, regeneration, and the Christian life of holiness.

Such teachings could be found even if they were scattered through a great mass of miscellaneous matter, but the bulk of Wesley's Fifty-two Sermons is not very great, and the discourses themselves are readable and remarkably clear and concise.

Much might be said of a similar character of Wesley's Notes on the New Testament where the doctrine rises directly from its Scriptural foundation and the statements are even briefer than in the Sermons. So the fundamental and the general stand together in such a form that they are easily discerned.

Then, in the Twenty-five Articles of Religion, doctrines are presented concisely and compactly as declarations without connection with the literary forms belonging to an address or a running comment.

The doctrinal statements were also in, and throughout the Ritual, and could be discovered therein by those who read or listened to those noble services.

Thus doctrines are found everywhere in these standards, and, if a doctrinal treatment is missed in one, it may be found in another. In Wesley's Fifty-two Standard Sermons, one may say, they are presented more diffusely than in the Articles and the Creed. In a comparative sense that may be permitted to pass, but there is nothing loose in or about these Standard Sermons of Wesley, while the sermonic style of presentation in the discourses is an advantage to the seeker for the truth.

For the greater part of two centuries the doctrines of Methodism have been known to the multitudes. At the beginning the people heard them, and later read them. The few preachers at the beginning, the hundreds a little later, the thousands after that, and the tens of thousands in more recent times, had learned the Methodist doctrines, and went forth to the masses, and also to the select classes, and, when the people heard these teachings, they understood them and were moved by them, and, as Bishop Hendrix has said of these early preachers, "They knew what they wanted to say, and others knew what they had said when they were through."[1]

Somewhere they learned this doctrinal system, so that all could preach the same gospel, and that somewhere was in the doctrinal standards.

From the doctrinal standards it always has been easy to gather the doctrines of Methodism, and, if so,

[1] Bishop E. R. Hendrix, D. D.: *Methodist Quarterly Review* (South), April, 1907.

then there is no absolute necessity for making new standards at the present time.

One of the remarkable facts, seldom, if ever mentioned, or even recognized, in very recent writings, is that Methodism, even before it had an organization, possessed essentially a complete theological system, for Methodism existed before it developed anything of the nature of an ecclesiastical organization, and a considerable time before the first society was started, toward the close of the year 1739, Wesley was preaching Methodist doctrines.

It was in May, 1738, when, at the Aldersgate Street meeting, John Wesley's heart was "strangely warmed" and he experienced the "assurance" of the divine acceptance, and in the next month, June 11th, 1738, he preached at Saint Mary's, Oxford, and before the University of Oxford, his sermon entitled "Salvation by Faith," from the text, "By grace are ye saved through Faith" (Eph. ii. 8).

From facts like these it is evident that at least by this time "the great principles of Scriptural religion," as Doctor Burwash states, had "demonstrated themselves to Mr. Wesley's head and heart."[1]

Professor Burwash indicates these great principles which Mr. Wesley had certainly accepted in 1738, as follows:

"1. The universality and impartiality of God's grace to man as manifested in the provisions of the atonement.

"2. The freedom of the human will, and man's individual probational responsibility to God.

"3. The absolute necessity, in religion, of holiness in heart and life.

[1]Rev. N. Burwash, S. T. D., Introduction, p. xii.

"4. The natural impossibility of this to fallen human nature.

"5. The perfect provision for this necessity and impossibility, as well as for the pardon of past sins, in the salvation offered by Christ.

"6. The sole condition of this salvation—faith.

"7. The conscious witness of the Spirit to this salvation.

"This full-orbed conception of spiritual religion embraced the great Scriptural verities of all ages and schools of Christian thought. It grasped the wideness of God's love with the old Greek Christian and the modern Arminian, and it sounded the depths of the human heart with Augustine. It maintained the necessity of good works with the Roman Church, and it recognized the peculiar import of faith with Protestantism. With the Churchman it held the importance of means, and with the evangelical mystic it recognized the peculiar office of inward grace; and it built the doctrines of inward holiness and Christian perfection of the English mystics upon their true foundation, by uniting them to the evangelical principle of saving faith."[1]

In these seven points Professor Burwash finds the essential outline of the Wesleyan system of theology, and suggests that "The historical key to these (Wesley's) Sermons is to be found in the development of Mr. Wesley's own spiritual life."[2]

Then Doctor Burwash adds to the above citation: "From the date above referred to (1738), it may be said that Mr. Wesley's system was in some sense com-

[1] Dr. N. Burwash: Introduction to Wesley's Sermons, Toronto, pp. xii, xiii.

[2] Burwash: Introduction, p. xi.

plete. It certainly was filled out and perfected in some points, and pruned and purified at others; but from this date *no essential element was wanting.* In all its fundamental principles the gospel which henceforth he preached, and at the same time verified in his own experience was unchanged." [1]

So, when Wesley's ecclesiastical organization began, about a year and seven months after that, it started with an already prepared theological system which it understood from the beginning. Indeed it can be shown that Wesley had glimpses of some of the essential doctrines years before the time indicated by Professor Burwash.

The doctrines were understandable because the system was simple. Under the doctrines were the Scriptures and a sound philosophy, and they did not depend upon abstruse philosophical discussions or dissertations, but on their clearness, their reasonableness and their Scripturalness, so that youth and age, and the illiterate as well as the scholarly, could perceive their truth.

The great aim was to get sinners saved from sin and to keep human beings in the path of righteousness, and everything centered on that kind of teaching and that kind of effort, so as to secure practical results in the formation and development of Christian character through a simple and practical theology.

Because of their nature the doctrines of Methodism were, and are, preachable, and preachable by the learned clergyman, and by the simple minded and non-scholastic exhorter.

In a qualified sense, Methodist doctrines are not only

[1] Burwash, Introduction, p. xiii.

preachable, but they are the only doctrines that can be preached to-day with effectiveness, and, one may say, are the only doctrines the people generally listen to willingly and gladly, and, hence, other denominations are accepting or approximating them.

They are not numerous, but few, fundamental, and comprehensive, and they have an appeal both to the populace and to the select few, recognizing, as they do, the freedom of the human will, and presenting a free and a full salvation, and to-day these doctrines, which Methodism demonstrated and emphasized, are preached in the pulpits of many denominations.

It would seem, therefore, unlikely that better doctrines could be obtained, or that a change of standards would make any practical improvement.

They have been the most convincing and the most persuasive doctrines for nigh on to two centuries. That has been the consensus of opinion among all classes, and the facts sustain this wide-spread opinion.

The doctrines have done exceedingly well for more than a century and three-quarters. They have impressed the plain people, they have influenced the learned classes, and they have modified the creeds of great and historic Churches. That being the case, they must then have been understood by those who preached them and by those who heard them. In other words, as they stand, they must be fairly clear, and as the reason for revision is not on the surface, there is no need for precipitate action.

If the doctrines have been, and are, so potent, and have been so easily found in the standard forms as they are at present, and are so easily understood, that the exact doctrinal statements are possessed by the many,

one may ask what need is there for changing the present standards, and for putting new standards of doctrine in their place?

With such a history of adaptation and achievement back of these doctrines, some will find it difficult to understand any suggestion looking toward change in the standards in any sense.

If the doctrines have been, and are, so effective, and none others have been more effective, or so effective, the presumption seems to be against any proposition to substitute new doctrines in whole or part, or to eliminate old ones, or to add those that are new.

Strong arguments would be needed to break down this logical presumption that there is no necessity or any pressing need, for new doctrines or any radical modification of those that have stood so long, have done so much, and still retain such manifest vitality.

There is another reason for deliberateness and caution in the presence of such a suggestion. Those familiar with such matters know that it is dangerous to recast or reconstruct doctrinal statements, for no one can predict what form will come out of the unknown mould, and no one can forecast what good thing may be lost, or what injurious thing may slip in, during the process of reconstruction, and, especially, in an era when theological thought in many minds is considerably unsettled.

A few general principles will be in place:

Doctrinal standards should not be disturbed merely to gratify the peculiar notions of a few persons.

No matter h w full a creed may be, it may not be full enough for everybody, and, no matter how condensed it may be, it cannot be sufficiently condensed for some.

If the truth is sufficiently set forth for every practical purpose, it is probably safer to let it alone than to risk uncertain changes, and it is especially perilous at any time to undertake a general revision of doctrinal statements. Once a standard is settled a wholesale revisal may not be judicious, unless there is wide-spread error therein. Usually it is better simply to modify an objectionable item. People accustomed to certain verbal forms of expression in religious doctrines or services are apt to resent changes, unless they can be shown to be absolutely necessary.

There is no demand on the part of the Church for a new standard, or for any change of the old standards, of doctrine. Only one serious attempt has been made to officially recast or, rather, restate the doctrines of Methodism.

In the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, held at Birmingham, Alabama, in May, 1906, a resolution was offered asking for "such a statement of our faith and such an expression of our doctrinal system as is called for in our day," and also providing for a commission of members to "invite other branches of Methodism to unite" with the Church South "in the preparation of such a statement."

This was presented on the 7th of May, of that year, and was referred to a special committee, and this special committee, in its report, recommended the passage of the above resolution "with the understanding that the preparation of this new statement of doctrine shall be undertaken by the commission only when such coöperation on the part of the other representative branches of Methodism shall have been secured as shall give to the statement prepared an ecumenical character

and make it an expression of the faith of world-wide Methodism," and the commission was to report back to the General Conference in 1910.

This report was adopted by the General Conference, on the fourteenth of May, 1906.

The paper presented on the seventh of May opened with the following:

"While reaffirming our absolute faith in our Twenty-five Articles of Religion, we do not believe that in their present form they meet the existing needs of the Church as a statement of the doctrinal system of evangelical Methodist Arminianism."

Referring to this, Professor Wilbur F. Tillett, S. T. D., LL. D., of Vanderbilt University, says: "The first sentence above quoted was later by consent omitted from the resolution, which was then referred to a special committee."[1]

Just why that introductory paragraph was omitted may not seem perfectly clear, but it is plain that the General Conference was not willing to support the statement that the Articles of Religion "do not" "meet the existing needs of the Church as a statement of the doctrinal system of evangelical Methodist Arminianism," and the refusal to pass was a practical rejection of that statement, for, though it was "by consent" it was omitted, it was an actual refusal to adopt.

The paragraph reaffirmed, as on the part of the Conference, its "absolute faith in our Twenty-five Articles of Religion," though it closed with the assertion that "we do not believe in their present form they meet the existing needs of the Church as a statement of

[1] Doctor W. F. Tillett: "A Statement of the Faith of World-Wide Methodism" (Pamphlet); Nashville, 1907, p. 2.

the doctrinal system of evangelical Methodist Arminianism."

The omission of this paragraph may have been due to positive disbelief in the latter statement, and the conference or an overwhelming majority thereof, were opposed to such an apparent reflection on the Articles. Certainly they would not let it go to vote.

As a matter of fact, however, the Articles of Religion never professed to be the full statement of the doctrinal system of the Church, but that Wesley and the Church meant them to be understood as additional to the previously existing standards, so that to know the faith of the Church all the standards were to be taken together.

There was no question, whatever, as to the Conference's respect for the Articles of Religion. This Professor Tillett plainly states in a foot-note in his pamphlet, where he says:

"The action of the General Conference appointing the Commission was taken with the distinct understanding, on the part of all those who voted for it, that the Twenty-five Articles are not to be altered in any way, but are to remain in the Discipline where they now stand. Those who signed the original resolution and those who advocated its adoption affirmed in unqualified terms their absolute faith in these Articles." [1]

This proposition coming from the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, was presented to the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, when it met in Baltimore, in May, 1908, and by it was referred to a committee.

[1] Professor Tillett's Pamphlet, p. 6.

That Committee reported as follows:

"Your Committee have pondered with care the gravity of this important proposal and of its possible consequences. We remember with gladness, in this year 1908, especially, our common origin, our common traditions, and our common faith. We desire also to reciprocate most cordially every manifestation of fraternity.

"We are, nevertheless, compelled in the presence of this overture to recall the earnest wish of our fathers that our Articles of Religion and our Standards of Doctrine should remain unchanged, and, having weighed the arguments in favor of it, we are not convinced of the necessity or the expediency of the proposed new statement of our doctrines.

"Accordingly, we unanimously recommend that this General Conference respectfully decline to take the action requested, at the same time renewing the expression of our fraternal love for the Methodist Episcopal Church, South."[1]

This was the end of that move for a restatement of the doctrines of Methodism. However, it is to be observed that the proposition was not to change the standards but to prepare a "restatement." The practical result, no doubt, if the move had been successful, would have been to have made practically a new standard, and this practically, in common estimation, would have modified the old standards, even if the Articles were printed as before.

Plainly the Churches did not want any interference with existing standards, and the great need was not new standards, or restatements of doctrine in new

[1] "Journal Methodist Episcopal Gen. Conf.," 1908, p. 770.

language, so much as the old faith in and the earnest preaching of the old doctrines.

Bishop Hendrix, in the article to which reference already has been made, thus emphasizes the necessity of preaching Methodist doctrine to produce such results as have been described. Thus, he says:

"Not only was the power of primitive Methodism due to the clearness with which the early itinerants apprehended and preached its distinctive doctrines by the help of the Holy Spirit, but any departure from such strong doctrinal preaching has been marked by a loss of power.

"Methodist preachers of a century and a century and a half ago confined themselves largely to doctrinal preaching. They did not attempt many themes, but always the great themes.

"The strength of Methodism has ever been its positive beliefs and its fearless proclamation of them. Because we believe, therefore have we spoken. Whenever we have spoken clearly and strongly, we have had a hearing.

"An imperative need of our day is for more doctrinal preaching, not less. Men must believe strongly if they preach strongly." [1]

Then, if the people will believe and the ministers will preach the old doctrines, it will not be necessary to make new standards, and the conclusion of the whole matter is that the Church does not need any new standards of doctrine, but does need to believe tremendously in those it has.

[1] Bishop E. R. Hendrix: *Methodist Quarterly Review* (South), April, 1907.

XXV

CHANGES SHOULD BE SCRUTINIZED

SO important are the doctrinal standards of a Church that once they have been settled they should be strongly protected, and proposed changes in the standards, or the expressions of doctrine, should be most carefully scrutinized.

There should be the instant challenge, and there should ring out the command, Halt! no matter who makes the proposition to change, no matter whether it be made by friend or foe and whether it be a major or a minor change. There should be an imperative command that the harmlessness, the benefit, and the pressing necessity of the change shall be demonstrated before any action be taken.

Not only should proposed changes in doctrinal expressions, or in the doctrinal standards undergo a severe scrutiny, but modifications that have been made should be studied and restudied.

Mistakes may have been made and destructive ideas may have been introduced from which the Church may have suffered serious injury, or which, in course of time, may greatly damage the doctrinal teaching of the Church.

That an error has been committed or a wrong has been perpetrated does not necessarily make it eternal, but, once detected, it should be reconsidered and reversed, and the sooner that is done the better. In this it is never too late to mend, and it is never too soon to

begin the mending, for nothing is so destructive to a Church as wrong beliefs.

It may be not only proper, but necessary to ask: Have all the revisions of formularies containing doctrinal statements been constitutional?

This is a question not only of historical interest, but also of great practical importance. For, if changes in doctrinal statements have been made without the constitutional process, then the Constitution has ceased to be a safeguard, and if a change has been made unconstitutionally in one instance, it may be followed as a precedent, and other changes may be brought about in the same unconstitutional way, though, strictly speaking, an illegal action is not a legal precedent for another illegal action, and, when the Constitution is found to be against the action, the action is null and void and cannot fairly be used as a justification of a repetition of the illegal proceeding.

Nevertheless, practically, laws may be broken down by a repetition of careless, or illegal actions, and, when laws are disregarded or overcome by illegal practices, the trend is toward anarchy.

It is, therefore, the duty of every one to insist that the Constitution and the statute law shall be duly respected by the makers of law and the legal executives, and the legislators and the executives themselves should rigidly observe the requirements of the Constitution and the laws made in accordance therewith.

And especially is this important as to doctrinal expressions, for in a Church the doctrines are of vast importance and even more important than matters of ordinary governmental polity.

It is to be noted that improper and illegal changes

may be made in doctrinal formularies in various ways. Thus they may be made intentionally or unintentionally. They may be made by design, or they may be made through carelessness or indifference.

The possibility of such changes grows out largely from the fact that in popular representative bodies, such as General Conferences or Conventions, there are apt to be many who are inexperienced and do not know the niceties of the law, and who do not always discern the methods which others are employing to further their purposes.

So, without intending it, they may permit a wrong thing to be done, or a right thing to be done, in an irregular and unconstitutional way, and the movers themselves may not realize the wrong that is being done.

However, no matter what may be the motive, a thing done illegally, or unconstitutionally, is a grievous wrong to the body itself, and, particularly, if it touches the definition or expression of religious doctrine.

It is, therefore, a most important question: Has the Church anywhere, or anyhow, at any time, changed or departed from the original and constitutional forms and made changes in the doctrinal expressions of the Church in an irregular or illegal way?

The General Conference, the highest delegated body in the Church, cannot change the Articles of Religion, and it cannot "establish any new standards or rules of doctrine contrary to our present existing and established standards of doctrine," that is to say, as they were in 1808, when the constitutional restriction was adopted.

In other words the General Conference cannot make a doctrinal change directly or indirectly, or in any way. That being the case, various things follow, thus:

If the General Conference cannot change the Articles of Religion, or set up any other formulations not in harmony with the teachings of the standards of doctrine, then no individual can, or has a right to, attempt to do so within the Church, and the General Conference cannot authorize, permit, or give opportunity for its agent, or any other person, to do so. In other words, its committee, or commission, cannot do so, and the test of any official, or semi-official, or any other statement of doctrine in the Church, is its conformity to the standards of doctrine as in 1808, and its enactment through the constitutional process.

It is equally true also that the General Conference has no right to recognize, or permit to be recognized, any doctrinal statement through a committee, commission, or otherwise, prior to the formulation of the statement, its presentation to the General Conference for its scrutiny and formal action, and its passage through the complete constitutional process for a constitutional change, and that requires the constitutional action of all the constitution making, and mending, powers of the entire Church.

Further, it follows, that any doctrinal formulation by the General Conference, or any agent thereof, is null and void, if it is contrary to the Articles of Religion or the established standards of doctrine in existence in 1808, when the Constitution was made.

If the General Conference cannot in any way change the Articles of Religion, or set up "any new standards or rules of doctrine contrary to the (then) present ex-

isting and established standards of doctrine," then nothing less than the sovereign power of the entire Church could, or can, do so.

Some have even denied that the whole Church has any power to do it, by constitutional process or otherwise, but there is dissent from that view.

A question may be raised as to whether all the revisions of doctrinal formularies, which are supposed to have been made, have been made according to the constitutional process.

That will start other questions, thus:

Is the mere action of a delegated General Conference sufficient? To this the answer must be: Certainly not as to doctrines, for on that the Conference is restricted as it is on any and every organic matter.

Or, would it be sufficient for a commission composed of a number of persons, or a single individual, even if authorized by a General Conference, to make a doctrinal revision? Again the answer would be: It would not be sufficient, because the General Conference itself does not possess such power.

Would it be sufficient for an individual or a larger body, authorized by a General Conference, to make a new or revised formulation of doctrines without further action by the Church using its function of constitution-making? For the same reason this would not be sufficient or legal, for the General Conference has no power to empower in the matter of doctrinal formulations. If the General Conference cannot change the Articles of Religion, or make any contrary standards of doctrine, no individual, or any number of individuals, below the General Conference, can do so.

Specifically a question may be raised as to whether

any doctrinal expressions have been changed in certain formularies like the Ritual and the Catechism, recently, or in the course of years, and, if they have been modified, whether the changes have been made constitutionally. If there is such an inquiry then the tests already suggested should be applied.

If the changes have not been made according to the constitutional process, then there might arise another question, namely, if they have not been constitutionally adopted, whether they are binding upon the Church.

A question like this might be pressed: Suppose a General Conference adopted changed formularies which contained statements of, or allusions to doctrines, without seeing their contents, or hearing them read, or knowing what they contained, would that be a legal action? Or, suppose a General Conference told a party to revise a formulary containing doctrines and the Conference did not vote upon it at all, could such a revised formulary have any legal standing? It must be evident that any doctrinal form not adopted in a legal manner would not have any legal status.

If illegal matters of this nature have assumed the place of legal enactments, then one might raise the question: Can an unconstitutional thing become constitutional by continuing in its unconstitutionality?

A few years ago the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, appointed a commission to make a study of changes which had appeared in the formularies of that Church, and the Commission in its report enunciated the principle that the General Conference alone did not possess the legal power to change the formularies, and recommended that modifications made in the Ritual by the General Confer-

ences be eliminated and that the original ritual forms be restored.

These questions are not merely curious moot questions to while away the idle moments of a dreaming doctrinaire. They are exceedingly practical questions that touch the very vitals of the denomination.

They relate to the past, they involve the present, and they have a decided bearing on the future of the Church.

What has been done in relation to the doctrinal standards should be studied, what we have should be severely scrutinized, what is proposed now, or may be in the future, should be sternly challenged and compelled to prove its worth and its necessity, and, further, it should be insisted that the full constitutional process be followed if changes are to be made.

XXVI

DANGERS TO BE GUARDED AGAINST

EVERY good thing in this world is subject to attack. Every form of life is beset by forces which tend to destroy it. Every truth meets opposition and must struggle for its existence.

The same thing is true as to religious doctrine. Its truth may have been demonstrated a thousand times, and it may seem to be on a firm foundation and appear to be impregnable, and yet antagonists will continue to arise.

Some attacks will be open while others will be like the concealed operations of the sapper and miner who works underground and out of sight.

So, everything that would survive must be on the watch, and ever alert to defend itself against the destroyer, no matter what his approach may be.

The Methodist Episcopal Church, like every other body of the Methodist family, has its standards of doctrine with which other doctrinal utterances that profess to be Methodist Episcopal may be compared and tested, and, if they do not stand the test, they can be exposed and rejected. More than that, the Church has laws to protect its doctrines and to punish those within the Church, who make, or try to make, a disturbance in the Church by utterances against the Church's doctrines.

And yet there have been instances where individuals in the Church have arrayed themselves against some

particular doctrine or doctrines and, after trial and conviction of the offense, have suffered expulsion from the Church. The number of such instances of trial and expulsion have indeed been very few, but such cases have existed.

That there have been other cases, where the offending parties have never been brought to trial, has been a matter of rumor, and, indeed, has been boldly asserted.

Whether the parties ought to have been taken to task, and had charges preferred against them, and been subjected to trial is not for us here to determine, without being in possession of the facts. If, however, there has been an intentional violation of the law in this regard, then the law might be invoked. For that the law was made. But we here state the case, particularly to show that Methodist doctrines are not exempt from attack, even from within.

It has been the boast of Methodism, for very many years, that though there have been differences on questions of polity, there have been no divisions on matters of doctrine, as though there was pronounced harmony as to doctrines, but whether that can be said as strongly to-day as it has been declared in the past, is, in some minds, seriously questioned.

Some assert that there are insidious influences at work against the doctrines, and, if that be so, it is more dangerous than open antagonism, and, even if these statements are only rumors, still there is enough in them to promptly put the Church on its guard.

It must be admitted that there has been some disposition to disparage or ignore some of the doctrinal formulations of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and a

few persons have gone so far as to deny that the Church has any standards of doctrine.

That there has been even a slight disposition in this direction starts many questions and demands many explanations.

For any one to declare that there are no doctrinal standards is a confession of ignorance of the facts which have been demonstrated throughout the generations.

As to the disposition to question and disparage the doctrines themselves, that may be due to a number of different things.

First, and always, we are to remember that those who do so are in numbers very few—indeed, a very small fraction.

Second, it is to be remembered, that such reflections on the standards are generally not so much, or at all, on what may be termed the peculiar teachings of Methodism, but usually on the fundamental teachings of Christianity as held by the great Protestant denominations, so that such persons are really striking at the essentials of Christian belief, rather than merely at the doctrines of Methodism.

Though these persons are small in number, yet they are so assertive and presumptuous at times, that it is fitting they should receive at least a little attention, and we should attempt a brief presentation of their mental attitude and the reason for their antagonism to the doctrines and the law of the denomination.

In some instances their actions seem due to their youth, which, in a little time, they are likely to outgrow. In some cases it appears to be an outcome of the "little learning (which) is a dangerous thing," so that, when they gain more learning, their dangerous

condition may be cured. In a few other cases the attitude may spring from intellectual pride and the pleasure which comes from an assertion of intellectual independence. They think they have made a discovery and flatter themselves that their assertions prove them to be above the average of their fellows.

In some instances the parties have been misled, or even perverted, through outside influences, perchance, having been educated in foreign non-Christian schools or under teachers who were so educated.

In other cases the individuals really think they are right, and they form the most difficult class to deal with. Such are to be treated with kindness and firmness. They should be shown their error and kindly convinced that the Church also has its rights, and that its doctrines must be respected quite as much as its Constitution and its statute laws, and, no matter how good or bad may be the motive of the individual, the Church must defend itself in a reasonable, Christian, and determined manner against those who profess to be its friends, or even its sons, when they attempt to undermine the faith of the Church.

Such expressed antagonism, if permitted to proceed, would gradually impress the ministry and the membership with the notion that, notwithstanding the creed of the Church and the law relating thereto, it makes no difference what one in the Church believes or does not believe, and then the denomination would tend to break down into a condition of anarchy which would logically, ultimately, and actually destroy the Church itself.

If an individual can blot out any doctrine he pleases, and another destroy some other doctrine, and another

some other, and so on, what would be left, and where would there be respect for any doctrine? The result would be doctrinal chaos, and the destruction of the doctrines would be the destruction of the very foundations of the Church, for religious beliefs are more vital than mere polity.

At the same time Methodism is not narrow as to doctrinal beliefs. It grants latitude on non-essentials, and allows the individual to think for himself on minor matters, but it insists tremendously on the essentials of Christianity, and demands that people shall be well settled on the fundamentals of the Christian religion.

It will patiently and lovingly help the beginner who is feeling his way toward the truth, but, if the individual undertakes to overturn the truth as it is in Methodism, it will not permit him to do it inside its Church. As the General Rules have been saying since the early part of 1743: "We will admonish him of the error of his ways. We will bear with him for a season. But if then he repent not, he hath no more place among us. We have delivered our own souls."

The Church does not by pains and penalties attempt to coerce the individual, but concedes his liberty to hold and utter other views, but not in the Church, and it will not prevent his going into some other denomination where he may find doctrines more in harmony with his own views, but it must maintain its own doctrines. In that there is nothing unreasonable, for there can be no question that ministers and members who have accepted and subscribed to the doctrines of the Church, should respect their solemn vows, conform to these doctrinal teachings, and be obedient to the law at least while they are in the denomination.

Protestantism holds as sacred the right of private judgment, and Methodism is Protestant and stands for a free intellect and a free conscience in relation to doctrinal beliefs, but each Protestant body claims the right to define and defend its own standard doctrines, and to demand that they shall be respected by all within its fold while its door swings outward for all who hold and seek other views and wish to advocate contrary teachings. Anything else would be destructive of the peace, the prosperity and the very existence of the denomination.

As has been seen, those who constructed the organism of the Methodist Episcopal Church took various measures to protect its doctrinal teachings, and yet there are illegal ways by which these doctrines may be weakened, and unlawful doctrines or contrary doctrinal standards may be slipped in, built up, or substituted, for the genuine teachings of the Church, unless the ministers and members are themselves well informed as to the doctrinal standards of the denomination, and are ever sensitively on the alert for their defense.

It has been shown that the General Conference is precluded from setting up any standards contrary to the established standards of doctrine existing in 1808, and, by parity of reasoning, is prohibited from permitting anybody in the Church to publish formulations containing doctrines contrary to those established and existing standards. Yet, if there ever was a General Conference made up of uninformed or indifferent delegates, it might enact contradictory doctrinal formulations, or authorize individuals to construct formularies which would be out of harmony with the real teachings of the Church, and the Church would be

saddled with the contrary productions, but, even then, the Church might be saved by an appeal made to the Annual Conferences by any member, or minister, or by a test made in the civil courts, or by an agitation carried to a General Conference. In the meantime any one could pronounce the illegal action to be unconstitutional.

Then there may be efforts to weaken and overthrow the doctrinal standards by some other indirect method, and, unfortunately, the indirect method may be exceedingly effective. Thus by publicly and privately making light of, or antagonizing, the standard formulations, the hearers' respect for them may be weakened, and by frequently hearing such counter declarations, doubtless many might be influenced thereby and perverted in their own thinking.

Then there is a way of seemingly evading the law, and practically making new standards of doctrine, without changing the wording of the legal standards, and that by ignoring the legally established standards such as the Articles of Religion, by paying no attention to them, and saying, or writing, or printing other and different statements, regardless of what is in the constitutionally established formulations.

If this is permitted, in course of time the masses become unfamiliar with the real standards, and the people, hearing, or reading, these contrary statements, come to accept these unauthorized and illegal presentations as the views of the Church, and before long these illegal utterances may become the popular standards of doctrine though they are unconstitutional.

In this way, though the legal standards are verbally untouched, and stand unchanged in the print, they may

be relegated to the "innocuous desuetude" that in popular estimation becomes a practical abrogation. This insidious method should be watched and promptly checked.

There are practical and legal ways by which this violation and result can be prevented, but they may be of little avail unless they are promptly brought to bear. However it must not be forgotten that the constitutional standard remains the legal standard in spite of all such indirect action.

Further, this illegal process may be given a seemingly official sanction in various ways, or it may be so construed by some.

Suppose, for example, resolutions, reports, or other papers, adopted by Church bodies, and, particularly, by General Conferences, designedly or otherwise, contain expressions, or declarations, which contradict, weaken, or inaccurately express, the doctrinal standards of the Church, and these were permitted to stand unchallenged and uncorrected, and such things were repeated from time to time through the course of years, or say a single generation or less, the tendency would be to make the impression on the average mind that they were faithful presentations of the doctrines of the denomination, and that these particular statements, or phrasings, had official sanction, and they might be so quoted, or, at least, it might be inferred that they were just as good as any other doctrinal expressions that had been made by the Church, or in the Church, and this might be especially with those who did not know the Church's doctrinal history or the processes of constitution making.

Thus, again, suppose there was a new and irregular

revision, or restatement, of formulations of any kind, and, in the making thereof, constitutional and standard expressions of doctrine were modified, or eliminated, and that different, or contrary, statements or phrasings, were introduced, and these changes were permitted to stand, it is easy to see how these departures from the standard expressions might, in the popular mind, come to be regarded as reliable presentations of the real and constitutional expressions of the Church's doctrines on these particular points, or at least as fair equivalents thereof.

The Church should realize that such changes in doctrinal expressions are possible and, indeed, probable, unless the Church is constantly alert to prevent them, or to promptly correct them if in any such way they chance to be made.

The Church should remember that, as the years go on, the number of indifferent or uninformed persons may increase, and they may become so numerous in bodies like the Conferences that such changes could be made without the majority being aware that dangerous and destructive modifications had actually and illegally been made.

For these reasons the Church should constantly be on guard and those who have made a study of such matters should be encouraged to criticize and challenge new phrasings that may in any degree imperil the old and standard doctrines.

Otherwise the Church may be aroused and even startled when it is too late, or, at least, exceedingly difficult to rectify the wrongs perpetrated against the doctrinal formulations of the denomination.

Then they may awake to the fact that serious

changes had been made in this or that formulary or in approved doctrinal expressions, when those who should have represented and defended the Church had failed to recognize that new voices, and new pens had used new phrases that were meant to convey new theological meanings, and that they involve such departures from the old putting of doctrines that they mean their beclouding or their practical destruction.

Again articles may appear even in denominational papers phrased in such a peculiar manner as to suggest doctrines different from those set forth in the Church's doctrinal standards. Or, in sermons, or other public addresses in the Churches of the denomination, there might be heard statements, assertions, or intimations that are out of harmony with the teachings of the Church.

These are calculated to undermine the faith of the Church, are positively destructive, and should be promptly challenged. It is somebody's business to make the challenge and, primarily, the one who reads or hears such dangerous expressions should make the challenge or bring the facts to the attention of some one who ought and will call a halt, raise the question, and defend the doctrines the Church has duly recognized.

It is the duty of the Church and its representatives to guard the Church against these and all similar dangers, and it is the duty of each individual in the Church.

XXVII

CLOSING OBSERVATIONS

TO recapitulate:

Methodism in general, as the Methodist Episcopal Church in particular, holds certain fundamental religious doctrines, and has standards of doctrine with which other or subsequent expressions of religious doctrine may be compared, and it demands that utterances or formulations of doctrine within the Church, and by those within the Church, shall harmonize with these standards, and, if they do not conform thereto, they are to be rejected, prohibited within the Church, and the parties holding and uttering these contrary doctrines, either in public or in private, are to be held responsible before the Church law, and to be inhibited from a repetition of the same.

The Church demands that its doctrines and doctrinal standards shall be respected by all in the Methodist Episcopal Church, First, because the Church has legally framed them; Second, because they are based upon, or spring from, the Holy Scriptures; and, Third, because, though it believes in the right of private interpretation of the Scriptures, it holds that while people are in a Church, whose laws they have formally or informally agreed to obey, they should conform to the interpretation the Church, in these particulars, has placed upon the wording and teaching of the Scriptures.

For these reasons the Methodist Episcopal Church

has laws against any of its agencies, and, especially, the General Conference, setting up any official formulations of doctrine contrary to, or out of harmony with, the Church's constitutionally established standards of doctrine.

Further, the Methodist Episcopal Church has laws against persons in its ministry and membership who, publicly or privately, disseminate doctrines contrary to the Church's doctrinal standards, and in connection with these laws are severe penalties, even to the point of expulsion from the Church.

Yet there are some—a very few, comparatively—who seem unwilling to duly recognize and properly respect the standards of the Church.

One, for example, says: "There are no Methodist standards of doctrine. There are Christian standards which are common to Christian Churches generally, but there are no Methodistic standards."

From what the facts of law and history have revealed, it is evident that this assertion contains a half truth and a whole falsehood. It is true that common Christian truths are held by various Christian denominations in common, but, if these truths have been formulated and adopted by the Methodist Episcopal Church, they have become the accepted truths of that particular Church, no matter how many other Churches may have them, and, further, the Methodist Episcopal Church has various Scriptural truths, which, in form or degree, are different from the formulations of other denominations, and so are regarded as peculiar to this Church.

In a recent book there is the statement that "Methodism shares with other churches the common heritage of Catholic Christianity."

Of course it does, for Methodism is in the historic succession from New Testament times, and openly professes to draw its doctrines from the Sacred Scriptures, as do other denominations. But, if it does share the common heritage of general Christianity in the matter of doctrines, that is no disparagement to Methodism, but an important fact in its favor. It is one of the branches of the Church of Christ, and legitimately shares the vital truth which is common to the Church, and in so doing helps to preserve the unity of Christendom.

The same writer observes that "As an offshoot of the established Church of England Methodism has always held fast to the cardinal doctrines which have come down from the beginning of Christianity."

But that does not make these cardinal doctrines, which have come down through the ages, any less the truth, or any less the formulations of Methodism, which has adopted and perpetuated them. It only proves that Methodism adheres to the ancient teachings which have come down from the New Testament and New Testament times, that it is broadly and genuinely Christian, and that it is in a true historic and apostolic succession of belief. That "Methodism has always held fast to the cardinal doctrines which have come down from the beginning of Christianity" is more to its credit than if it had discarded these "cardinal doctrines" and invented modern innovations.

But, again, the same book says:

"If, for example, it were proposed to try a Methodist minister for heretical views as to the Person of Christ, there would be no distinctively Methodist phrasing of the doctrine to be accepted as standard. No doubt

certain Methodist authors would be quoted, but the quotations would be found to embody the doctrine which the Church (general) has held from the beginning."

Just what may be the purpose of the author in these observations may not at first sight be perfectly clear. If the intention is to rule out statements of doctrine as authority on the ground that other Churches have also said the same or a similar thing, then very much that has been held by many denominations would be ruled out, and no denomination would have anything ancient to stand on in regard to fundamental Christian doctrines, for all have necessarily used formulations which were centuries old and truths which have come down from or near the initial period of Christianity.

The real question is whether it is held by the particular denomination and not whether it is held by it exclusively. It may be held, or may have been held, by a dozen other denominations, but, if it has been adopted, and is held, by the denomination in question, it is its doctrine, and must have authority in determining matters brought for decision within its jurisdiction.

Of course teachings of the Methodist Episcopal Church may run back through the centuries, and they claim to run back at least to the New Testament, and some of them may come down to the present time through the historic Churches, but that would not destroy or weaken the fact that they were doctrines of Methodism, and, if their germ at least could not be found in the Scriptures, according to Methodism they would not be true.

And though the latest formulation is that of the

Methodist Episcopal Church, it is, nevertheless, its formulation. It is its formal utterance—its standard of doctrine—no matter how many other Churches may have made use of the same material.

But, on the matter of "the Person of Christ," which has been mentioned, one's authority in the Methodist Episcopal Church is not limited to what miscellaneous authors have individually said. It has its legal standards which speak on this as on other subjects.

Thus, on this very point, the Methodist Episcopal Church has a most specific declaration in its second Article of Religion which says: "The Son, who was the Word of the Father, the very and eternal God, of one substance with the Father," etc.

In Wesley's Sermon, number twenty, on "This is the name whereby he shall be called, The Lord our Righteousness" (Jer. xxiii. 6), which is a standard, Wesley says: "His divine righteousness belongs to his divine nature, as he is *O ων*, he that existeth; 'over all, God, blessed forever;' the Supreme; the eternal; 'Equal with the Father, as touching his Godhead, though inferior to the Father as touching his manhood.' Now this is his eternal, essential, immutable holiness; his infinite justice, mercy and truth; in all which, he and the Father are one." . "I therefore no more deny the righteousness of Christ, than I deny the Godhead of Christ."

Turning to Wesley's Notes on the New Testament, also a standard of doctrine, Wesley says on "The word was God" (John i. 2): "Supreme, eternal, independent. There was no creature, in respect of which He could be styled God in a relative sense. Therefore He is styled so in the absolute sense. . . This Word,

who was God, was in the beginning, and was with God."

And so with other passages. So that in Methodist standards there is standard teaching "as to the Person of Christ," and such teachings would be the test as to whether the accused individual had been guilty of heresy, and it would make no difference if a hundred other Churches said the same thing in the same language. The only question of authority to be determined would be whether the article and the citations from the other standards were the declarations of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and of that there could be no doubt.

One thing is perfectly clear, and that is that the Methodist Episcopal Church made its Articles of Religion a standard of doctrine. That is shown by the act of the organizing Conference in 1784, by the law of 1792, and by the Constitution of 1808, as well as by other proofs, and every member and minister in the Methodist Episcopal Church is required to answer, and has answered in the affirmative, the question: "Do you believe the doctrines of the Holy Scriptures as set forth in the Articles of Religion of the Methodist Episcopal Church?"

Without that conformity no one could be admitted as a member, and no one could be ordained a Minister, in this denomination.

There can be no doubt that the Articles are standards, and that there are other doctrinal standards, which are to be respected. That being the case, it may be asked: What should be said of ministers who have solemnly taken their ordination vows, and who remaining in the ministry of the Methodist Episcopal Church,

yet preach and speak against the standards of the Church and are trying, directly or indirectly, to destroy or neutralize its Articles of Religion and its other doctrinal standards? or, What can they say for themselves? Such men must see that at the very least they have put themselves in an equivocal position, and that questions of honor, as well as law, are involved.

We may understand how, during a moment of uncertainty, a man's mind may be thrown into confusion on some particular point, but, then, it is not his duty to preach his doubt, but to be silent on the question, and to think it through.

In a little while his mind may swing back, but, if it does not, then it is for him to quietly and conscientiously consider what he ought to do under the circumstances.

The same questions and principles may be applied to the members should they antagonize the Articles and the other formulations of doctrine.

The Church, on its part, may, up to a certain point, cultivate the spirit of judicious patience, but it is not right for a Church to cultivate, or allow to be cultivated, the germinating seeds of self-destruction.

The Church may give every individual a fair chance, but it certainly is the duty of each individual to give his Church a fair chance in such matters.

There may be latitude as to non-essentials in ecclesiastical matters, but when the Church constitutionally has defined its fundamentals, these fundamentals, particularly as to doctrines, must be respected by all who remain within its membership.

Within a Church there must be respect for the Church's religious doctrines, or the Church itself will

deteriorate and the man who speaks against the doctrines of his Church, and remains within it, is likely himself to deteriorate.

Where the ministry, and the membership, individually, assert a claim to believe and teach differently from the Church, and each to be a law unto himself, it must mean confusion, conflict, and a rending of the body of Christ.

Outside the jurisdiction of the Church, one may not only think, but also speak, for himself, but one who is within the Church must conform.

On this point the courts have decided. Thus one court said: "If the rules make adherence to particular doctrines a condition of membership, then, so long as these rules continue, the repudiation of such doctrines would seem to determine a member's right to remain in the congregation." [1]

The individual, however, should have a higher motive than mere adherence to the law. History and law have their proper place and a legitimate force, but one should believe and sustain the doctrines of his Church because he really has faith in them from his own conviction. So each one should have an intelligent belief based on reading, study and meditation, particularly on the Holy Scriptures.

The Church must be something more than an organization without any settled views. It must be a believing organism made up of true believers.

The Church must be more than a mere ecclesiastical organization, with its Sunday and mid-week social clubs, and a body with its offices and salaries. It must

[1] Trustees, East Norway Lake Norwegian Evangelical Lutheran and others *v.* Halvorson, 43 Minn., 503.

have firm faith and spiritual life, and earnest effort to save mankind from sin and sinning, and to build up strength of moral and religious character.

The Reverend John Wesley, in his "Thoughts upon Methodism," in 1787, said:

"I am not afraid that the people called Methodists should ever cease to exist either in Europe or America. But I am afraid lest they should only exist as a dead sect, having the form of religion without the power. And this undoubtedly will be the case unless they hold fast both the doctrine, spirit, and discipline with which they first set out."[1]

Deadness must be guarded against, disregard of discipline is disastrous, but loss of religious belief is infinitely worse.

Methodism has spiritualized a large part of the world because of its own spiritual faith. This condition and influence should steadily continue, and Methodism should never anywhere become what Wesley calls "a dead sect," but any Church that loses its faith will die spiritually, even with a continuing external organization, and with continued external and automatic activities. Sound doctrine and spiritual life are the vital things.

It is necessary, therefore, that all connected with the Church shall study these questions and have an intelligent understanding of the doctrines of the denomination and intelligently maintain them.

It is necessary that the Church should ever be on the alert because there are lurking dangers. In human nature there is a tendency to depart from the truth.

[1] Wesley's "Works," Vol. XIII, p. 225. See Lelievre, "Life of John Wesley."

Paul predicted departures from sound doctrine. He said:

"For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth and shall be turned unto fables." [1]

Again the Apostle Paul says:

"Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils, speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron." [2]

Through the centuries these prophecies have been fulfilled and never more evidently than in the present times, and the old exhortation in the Epistle to the Hebrews is appropriate in these days:

"Be not carried about with divers and strange doctrines. For it is a good thing that the heart be established with grace." [3]

And once more the words of Paul:

"That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the slight of men, and cunning craftiness whereby they lie in wait to deceive." [4]

The Scriptures take the matter of doctrines very seriously and so should we.

It is necessary that pastors shall preach upon and in other ways instruct the people in the doctrines of the Church.

It is necessary that the Church, and all therein shall

[1] 2 Timothy iv. 3,4.
[2] 1 Timothy iv. 1, 2.
[3] Hebrews xiii. 9.
[4] Ephesians iv. 14.

demand that every minister of the Church shall respect the law of the Church relating to its doctrines.

It is necessary that every minister and every member shall realize that one cannot in the Church do as he pleases, or say what he pleases, when what he does or says is contrary to the law and the authoritative teachings of the denomination, and every person in the Church will do well to remember what Paul said to Timothy (1 Timothy iv. 16):

"Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself and them that hear thee."

Index

ADAM, 167, 169, 284, 307
Address to first President, 183
Advice, Wesley's, to "People Called Methodists," 132
Age, The, 5
Alexander, J. W., 64
America, 136, 149, 180; in America, 149, 150; in United States of, 149, 150, 182, 183
American, 181
American Conference, 139, 149
American Methodism, 136, 139
American Methodism reorganized, 142, 149
Anglican Articles, 44, 45, 47, 160
Annexed pieces, 242
Antinomianism, 86, 243
Antinomians, 89
Apostles' Creed, 27, 38, 39, 230
Apostles, Teaching of, 38
Arian, 93
Arianism, 93
Armenian Church, 41, 42
Arminians, 124
Arminius, James, 123
Arminianism, 86, 121
Arminianism, Wesleyan, 125, 126, 127
Arnold, Matthew, 31, 59
Article, An added, 173
Article XXIII, 177, 178, 179
Articles of Religion, 38, 44; law to protect, 211, 212; law strengthened, 213
Articles, Anglican, XXXIX, 44, 45, 47, 160
Articles, Wesley's XXIV, 157, 159–172
Articles, The XXV, 186–201; notes on, 201
Asbury, Francis, 148, 149, 150, 238; notes, 200
Athanasian Creed, 40
Athanasius, 40
Authoritative outside Discipline, 240, 241

BAPTISMAL COVENANT, 257
Barratt, Philip, 149
Barratt's Chapel, 149
Belief, 21
Bennetts, 35
Benson, Joseph, 62, 77
Birth sin, 87, 88, 92
Bishop, 147
Bishop, Wesley a, 147
British, 92, 116–119
Brown, John, Dr., 64
Bunting, Dr., 119
Burnet, Bishop, 55
Burwash, Professor, 266–268, 303–306, 313
Butler, Bishop, 55

CALVIN, JOHN, 122
Calvinism, 86, 121, 122, 123; Schaff on, 123
Calvinists, 46, 89
Canada, 115, 179
Carlyle, Thomas, 56
Catechism, 233, 234
Catholic spirit, 83, 84
Chalcedon, 40
Changes to be scrutinized, 323
Changes, Illegal, 326
Changes, Insidious, 336
Chapel, Barratt's, 149
Chapel, Lovely Lane, 149
Characteristics of Doctrine, 121
Character of Methodist, 93
Charles I, 54
Charles II, 54
Charterhouse, 56
Charters, 184

Checks, Fletcher's, 86
Children, Instructions for, 234–237
Christian doctrine, 34
Christian Perfection, 91, 92, 274
Christ, Teaching as to, 344
Church of England, 45, 46, 144
Clarke, Adam, 62, 91
Coke, Thomas, 63, 148, 149, 238; consecration of, 148; notes, 200
Colonial Methodism, 136, 137, 203
Common Law, 206, 227
Common Prayer, 40, 156
Condition, One, 95; implications in, 99
Conditions, 5, 55, 56
Conference, American, 139
Conference, British, 116, 117
Conference, Christmas, 149
Conference, Journals, 183, 184
Conference, Organizing, 149
Confessions of Faith, 43, 44, 45
Conformity, 54
Congregational Creed, 289, 290
Constitution, 217
Constitution of 1808, 218
Constitutional Defense, 218, 219
Conversations, 238
Councils, 40
Court decisions, 102
Covenant, Baptismal, 257
Cranmer, 54
Creed, 5, 27; Apostles', 27, 38; Athanasian, 40; Chalcedon, 40; Nicene, 39
Creeds, 29, 43, 50
Cromwell, 54
Curry, Dr. Daniel, 232

DALE, DR., 118
Dangers, 330
Declaratory Act, Scotch, 291
Declaratory Statement, Presbyterian, 295
Deeds, 115, 138, 139, 184, 208
Denomination, 6
Depravity, 168, 169, 284, 307
Depravity, Total, 169
Didache, 38
Discipline, The, 150, 200, 238, 239
Discipline, Notes on, 200
Discipline, History of, 201
Discipline, History of Revisions of, 201
Doctrinal characteristics, 121–135
Doctrinal effects, 278–296, 316
Doctrinal minutes, 104
Doctrinal preaching, 322
Doctrinal standards, 8, 28, 49, 50, 51, 101
Doctrinal system, 103
Doctrinal tracts, 242–246
Doctrines, 70, 71
Doctrines, Wesley's, in what sense new, 130
Doctrines in America, 137
Doctrines and Discipline, 238–248
Dodd, Dr., 77, 273
Dogma, 5, 31
Dort, Synod of, 124

EARTHQUAKE SERMON, 111
Education at beginning, 64
Edward VI, 46, 54
Elizabeth, Queen, 54
Emory, John, 173
Emory, Robert, 176, 200
England, Reformation in, 53, 54
Episcopal organization, 144
Episcopius, Simon, 125
Episcopos, 147
Episcopos, Wesley an, 147
Established and Existing Standards, 225–237

FAITH, 21, 28
Faith, Saving, 257
Faulkner, Professor, 73
Fear, Wesley's, 348
Fetter Lane Society, 85
Fletcher, John, 62, 86
Followers, Wesley's, 85
Formularies, Related, 202
Free Church of Scotland, 291
Free Church of Wee Frees, 292
Freedom of the will, 124, 283, 286, 287, 308
Friends, The, 87

GENERAL CONFERENCE, restricted, 222
General Conference, not doctrine making body, 222, 225, 237

General Rules, 95, 103, 202
Greek Church, 41, 42
Green, J. R., 55, 60, 61, 279
Green, Rev. Richard, 115
Gregory, Dr., 56, 117, 118
Gregory, "Illuminator," 41

HALL, ROBERT, 63
Hamilton, Patrick, 53
Harrison, Dr., 264
Hate and love, 89
Heart as my heart, 81, 82
Hendrix, Bishop, 280–284, 312, 322
Henry VIII, 46, 52, 53, 56
Historic Standards, 36
History of Methodists by Wesley, 88; by Myles, 120; by Lee, 141
Holiness, 274, 275
Holy Club, 57

INSTITUTES, THEOLOGICAL, Calvin's, 122; Watson's, 64, 306
Interpreting Wesley, 270–277

JOHN STREET, 138

KING, LORD, 146

LAITY, Doctrinal obligations, 249–259, 347
Latitudinarian, 83, 84
Laud, 47, 126
Law, Common, 206, 227
Law of 1792, 211, 212
Lee, Jesse, 141, 244
Leighton, 55
Limborch, 126
Literature, 73
Liturgy, 229
Loof, Professor, 113
Love, Perfect, 275
Love and hate, 89
Luther, 53
Lutheran Church, 43
Lutheran Creed, 43, 44

MACAULEY, 59
Magnetism, 91
Mary, Queen, 54, 57
McTyeire, Bishop, 133
Membership, Doctrinal obligations, 249–259, 347
Membership, Law of 1792, 252
Methodism, 6, 59, 62
Methodism a marvel, 62
Methodism, American, 136, 138–141, 142, 157, 203
Methodism, British, 142, 179, 202
Methodism, Canadian, 179
Methodism, Wesleyan, 157, 203
Methodism's beginning in education and culture, 64; organization, 65; doctrinal basis, 66, 67, 68; doctrine, 65, 74, 75, 129, 131, 135; characteristics of, 121, 135; preaching, 65, 68, 69; doctrinal standards, 66, 70, 71
Methodist, Character of, 93
Methodist Episcopal Church, 149
Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States of America, 180–185
Methodist Episcopal Church, South, 233, 318
Methodist literature, 73
Methodist movement, 52
Methodist name, 57, 58, 132
Methodist scholars, 62, 63, 64
Methodists, Lee's History of, 141; Myles' History of, 120; Wesley's Short History of, 88
Methodists, numbers, 60; influence, 60, 61, 278–296
Methods of Methodism, 65
Miley, Professor John, 307
Minutes, 92, 104, 139, 140, 141, 158, 202, 229, 238, 239
Model deed, 115
Montesquieu, 55
Moravian, 85
Myles, William, 119, 120

NEW CHURCH, STANDARDS OF, 151, 153–155
New Testament, Notes on, 114
New things, 5
New York, 138
Nicene Creed, 39
Nonconformity, 54
Notes on New Testament, 114

OBLIGATIONS, LAY, 249–259, 347
Opinions, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 87, 93
Ordinations by Wesley, 148
Organization, American, 142–150
Organization, Wesleyan, 57, 59
Organization of Methodist Episcopal Church, 149, 150
Organizing Conference, 149, 150
Original Sin, 87, 88, 92, 168, 169, 284, 307
Original Sin, Wesley's article on, 168, 169
Orthodoxy, 79, 80
Oxford, 56

PALEY, 64
Patrick Hamilton, 53
Paul, 30, 31, 349, 350
People called Methodists, 79, 131
Perfection, 274, 275
Phelps, Prof. Austin, 285–288
Philadelphia, 138, 139
Pieces, Useful annexed, 242
Plain account of, 79, 274
Pope Pius, 90
Prayer for Rulers, 174
Prayer Book, 229
Preaching in Methodism, 65, 312
Preaching, Doctrinal, 322
Presbyterian Catechism, 45
Presbyterian Church, 45, 292
Presbyterian Confession, 45, 292
Presbyterian Confession, added chapters, 294
Primitive Church, 145
Primitive Church, Lord King's, 146
Protestant Episcopal Church, 39, 40, 47, 145, 146, 179
Protestant Reformation, 52; in England, 46; in Scotland, 53
Protestant Reformers, 160
Puritanism, 54

QUAKERS, 87
Questions, Wesley's, on Perfection, 275

REFORMATION, PROTESTANT, 52; English, 53, 54; Scotch, 53; Wesleyan, 54, 55, 56
Reformed Churches, 44
Religious beliefs, 21
Religious thought, 5
Remonstrants, 124
Reorganized American Methodism, 142–150
Requirements in Britain, 116–119
Restoration, 54
Revision of Standards, 318, 321
Ritual, 230–233
Ritual, Dr. Curry on, 232
Ritual, Church South on, 233
Roman Catholic Church, 41, 42, 43, 90
Romanism, Wesley on, 89
Rule, 95, 103
Rules, General, 95, 103, 157, 202

SAINT GEORGES, 139
Same people, same standards, 203, 204
Sanctification, 275
Schaff, Dr. Philip, 27, 39, 122
Scotland, Reformation in, 53; Free Church of, 291, 292
Scriptures, 76, 77
Secker, Archbishop, 87
Sermons, body of divinity, 113; Loof's opinion of, 113; not all standards, 12, 116; The Fifty-two, 104; Titles of, 105; Wesley's, 73, 104
Service Book, 144
Services, Occasional, 144
Shaw, Principal, 29, 45, 46, 47, 49, 50, 114, 115, 161, 172, 264
Shedd, Dr., 32
Sherman, 174, 201
"Side-Lights," 118, 119
Simpson, Bishop, 115, 237
Sin, Original or Birth, 87, 88, 92, 169
Smith, Rembrant S., 233
Society, Fetter Lane, 85
Society, Independent, 144
Society, United, 59
Society, Wesley's, 59
Socinian, 88
Socinianism, 88
Socinus, 88
Sound Words, 30, 37

Southey, 59, 60
Spawn of Hell, 83
Standards, American, 137–141
Standards, Are new needed? 297–322
Standards, Complemental nature of, 260–269
Standards, Doctrinal, 8, 28, 49, 50, 51, 101; Defense by Constitution, 217; Defense of, by Statute Law, 209
Standards, Established and existing, 225–237
Standards, Forms of, 38
Standards, Historic, 36
Standards, Needed, 28
Standards, Rejected, 321
Standards, Restating, 318
Statutory defense, 209
Stoughton, Dr., 118
Suggestions, Misleading, 341
Sunday Service, The, 144, 156, 182, 205, 228
System, Doctrinal, 74, 135

TAYLOR, DR. JOHN, 88
Taylor, Isaac, 55
Theological Institutes, Calvin's, 122; Watson's, 64, 306
Think and let think, 81
Thought, Religious, 5
Tigert, Dr. John J. (Bishop), 244, 245
Tillett, Dean, 126, 127, 128, 133, 135, 170, 171, 319, 320
Tillotson, 119
Titles of Churches, 185
Tracts, Doctrinal, 242
Tyerman, Luke, 235

UNIFORMITY, 54
Unitarian, 80
United Society, 59
United States, 180
United States of America, 180–185

VASEY, THOMAS, 148
Vindication, Wesley's, 86
Voltaire, 55

WAKELEY, 138
Walsh, Thomas, 62
Watson, Richard, 63, 124, 306
Watson "Institutes," 64, 306
Wesleys, The: Charles, 56, 57; John, 56, 57; Samuel, 56; Susannah, 57
Wesley, John, 56, 57, 59, 60; a standard, 103; key to Methodism, 72; organizer, 74; preacher, 73, 272; publisher, 73, 272; rapid writer, 273; scholar, 272
Wesley and Doctrines, 72, 74, 129, 131; broad as to non-essentials, 94; broke with Whitefield, 86; demanded faith in fundamentals, 75, 77, 82, 85, 91, 94; exacted belief in essentials, 74, 75, 94; held to fundamental doctrines, 75, 81; liberal, 75, 80, 134; not latitudinarian, 75, 80, 81; taught doctrines, 74
Wesleyan Methodist Church, 179
Wesleyanism, 157
Wesley misinterpreted, 80
Wesley's Arminianism, 125–128
Wesley's fear, 348
Wesley's letter to Americans, 145
Wesley's Sermons, 73, 104–113
Wesley's Societies did not withdraw, 144
Wesley's true method of interpreting, 270–277
West, Dr. Anson, 74, 128–130
Westminster Confession, 45
Westminster School, 56
Whatcoat, 148, 228
Whitbey, 127
Whitefield, George, 58, 62, 86
Wig and opinions, 87
Will, Freedom of, 124, 283, 286, 287, 308
Witness of Spirit, 309
Wolmer, Melchior, 122

Printed in the United States of America

JAMES A. MACDONALD, LL.D. *Editor Toronto Globe*

The North American Idea

The Cole Lectures for 1917. 12mo, cloth, net $1.25.

The famous Canadian editor enjoys an established and justly-earned reputation. In trenchant and stirring phrase Dr. McDonald discusses the growth and development of that spirit of liberty, just government, and freedom of individual action, in the light of its relation to the Great World War.

EDWARD LEIGH PELL, D.D. *Author of "Troublesome Religious Questions"*

What Did Jesus Really Teach About War?

12mo, cloth, net $1.00.

Unquestionably war is a matter of conscience. But in Dr. Pell's opinion what America is suffering from just now is not a troubled conscience so much as an untroubled conscience. That is why this book does not stop with clearing up troublesome questions.

ARTHUR J. BROWN, D.D. *Author of "Unity and Missions" "The Foreign Missionary," etc.*

Russia in Transformation

12mo, cloth, net $1.00.

Years may pass before New Russia will settle down to stability of life and administration. Meanwhile we may be helped to understand the situation and have a deeper sympathy with Russian brethren, if we study the conditions leading up to the Revolution and mind ourselves of fundamental characteristics which will undoubtedly affect New Russia regardless of the immediate outcome. The book is most timely.

R. A. TORREY, D.D. *Supt. Los Angeles Bible Institute*

The Voice of God in the Present Hour

12mo, cloth, net $1.25.

A new collection of sermons by the famous pastor-evangelist. They contain stirring gospel appeals and also special messages of enheartenment for those who find themselves perplexed and bewildered by the war conditions existing in this and other lands.

JAMES M. GRAY, D.D. *Dean of the Moody Bible Institute, Chicago*

Prophecy and the Lord's Return

12mo, cloth, net 75c.

What is the purpose of God in connection with the present international cataclysm. Does prophecy deal with the world to-day. The author, Dean of the Moody Bible Institute, of Chicago, is well-known as a Bible student and expositor, whose writings find appreciation throughout the Christian world. Dr. Grey's chapters have unusual interest at this time.

ROBERT E. SPEER, D.D. *Merrick Lectures, 1917, Ohio Wesleyan University*

The Stuff of Manhood

Some Needed Notes in American Character, net $1.00.

Dr. Speer holds that the moral elements of individual character are inevitably social and that one service which each man must render the nation is to illustrate in his own life and character the moral qualities which ought to characterize the State. To a discussion of these ideals and some suggested methods of their attainment, Dr. Speer devotes this stirring, uplifting book.

CORTLAND MYERS, D.D. *Minister of Tremont Temple, Boston*

Money Mad

12mo, cloth, net 50c.

The fearlessly-expressed views of a popular pastor and preacher on the all-important question of Money. Dr. Myers shows how a man *may* make, save, spend, and give money without doing violence to his conscience, or his standing as a member of the Church of Christ.

CHARLES REYNOLDS BROWN, D.D. *Yale University*

Five Young Men

Messages of Yesterday for the Young Men of Today. 12mo, cloth, 75c.

Dean Brown's literary output is always assured of welcome and a large reading. His new work is specially suitable to students in college, or young men in business or in the home. But the general reader of almost any type, will be able to find something of value in this latest volume from the pen of a recognized writer of light and leading.

DEWITT McMURRAY *of the Dallas Daily News*

The Religion of a Newspaper Man

12mo, cloth, net $1.50.

"Every one of the chapters sparkles with a thousand gems that Mr. McMurray has dug out of obscure as well as better-known hiding-places and sprinkled in among his own thoughts His quotations—and there are literally thousands of them—are exquisitely timed and placed."—*Springfield Republican.*

BURRIS A. JENKINS, D.D.

The Man in the Street and Religion

12mo, cloth, net $1.25.

"In a convincing and inspiring way and in a graceful style, the author presses home this truth, the result of years of trained study of human nature. The book is the kind that 'the man in the street' well enjoy."—*Boston Globe.*

TOOLS FOR WORKERS

J. ELLIS — *Author of "Gospel Seed"*

Weapons for Workers

A Book of Illustration. 12mo, cloth, net 75c.

"A mine of fresh outline addresses, illustrations and incidents, children's addresses and illustrations, Bible reading and talks, temperance addresses and points, etc. Especially helpful for prayer-meeting work."—*Christian Advocate.*

J. WILBUR CHAPMAN, D.D.

The Personal Worker's Guide

32mo, cloth, net 25c. Leather, full gilt edges, net 50c.

A vest pocket manual of helpful suggestion combined with the text of the Gospel of John, printed in emphasized form.

CHURCH ADMINISTRATION

ALBERT F. McGARRAH — *Lecturer on Church Efficiency in McCormack Theological Seminary*

"CHURCH EFFICIENCY SERIES"

Modern Church Finance

Its Principles and Practice. 16mo, cloth, net $1.25.

A complete guide to success in raising church funds by a most competent expert, illuminates every phase of the subject including: System, Modern Methods, Special Finance, Problems and their Solutions, How to Avoid Deficits and Raise Debts, How to Secure Larger Budgets for Church Support and Church Benevolences, How to Prepare for, and Conduct an "every member" Canvass, How to Collect Arrears, How to Make Church Finances Minister to Spiritual Efficiency, etc.

CHURCH HISTORY AND DEVELOPMENT

HERBERT B. WORKMAN, D.D., Litt.D.

The Foundation of Modern Religion

A Study in the Task and Contribution of the Medieval Church. *Cole Lectures,* 1916. Cloth, net $1.25.

Contents: The Church and its Task in the Middle Ages. The Dawning of the Missionary Consciousness of the Church. The Ideals and Antagonistic Forces of the Middle Ages. The Dawning of the Modern Social Consciousness. The Monks and their Work. Medieval and Educational Methods.

CHARLES S. MACFARLAND (Editor)

The Churches of the Federal Council

Their History, Organization and Distinctive Characteristics and a Statement of the Development of the Federal Council. 12mo, cloth, net $1.00.

"A book to be read, and read again; by none more needed than by those religionists who decline to try to better the present social order on the plea that we must leave that in the hand of God."—*The Outlook.*

ROBERT W. BOLWELL

After College—What?

12mo, cloth, net 75c.

A protest, in the form of autobiographical chapters, against dawdling through college. The author is sprightly and readable,—anything but preachy—but does put some very wholesome and helpful facts in such form as to grip the reader.

HALFORD E. LUCCOCK

Five-Minute Shop-Talks

12mo, cloth, net $1.00.

One of the best things of its kind yet issued. In each of these thirty or more brief addresses, Mr. Luccock employs terse, epigrammatic language and contrives to compress into a five-minute talk the wisdom and counsel of a fifty-minute sermon. Every word is made to tell—to tell something worth hearing and heeding.

CHARLES CARROLL ALBERTSON

Chapel Talks

A Collection of Sermons to College Students. 12mo, cloth, net $1.00.

Practical discourses on essential subjects delivered in various colleges and universities, including Columbia, Cornell, Dartmouth, Princeton, Yale, and Virginia. No one of these sermons required more than twenty-five minutes to deliver. They are characterized by earnest argument, familiar illustrations and forceful appeal.

CORTLANDT MYERS, D. D. *Author of "Real Prayer," "The Real Holy Spirit," etc.*

The Man Inside

A Study of One's Self. By Minister at Tremont Temple, Boston. 12mo, cloth, net 50c.

A four-fold study of the inner life of a man, in which the popular pastor of Tremont Temple, discusses the forces that make him, lift him, save him, and move him. The book is prepared in bright, interesting fashion, and abundantly furnished with suitable and forceful illustration.

JOHN T. FARIS *Popular-Price Editions*

The "Success Books"

Three Vols. each, formerly $1.25 net. Now each 60c net (postage extra).

Seeking Success
Men Who Made Good
Making Good

Dr. J. R. Miller says: "Bright and short and full of illustrations from actual life, they are just the sort that will help young men in the home in school among associates and in business."